BATTLEFAILED

"My god... this was a terrible idea."

May 10, 2010 - August 10, 2010

3 Months

"Let us be frank, gentlemen. Killer herds of undead grazing animals? Battle donkeys? Identical goblins? Dedicated necropoli? Artifice barrels? Slime lakes? Shit monsters? Forgotten beast incursions through artifact gem windows? Anti-gravity miners with fey moods?

Battlefailed is 2010's Boatmurdered".

"Together, through combined effort and force of will, we have created something to compare to that cthonian abyss from which so many dwarven legends have sprung. We have forged a new level of hell."

"My adventurer scout died rather quickly. I don't want to talk about it, it was like something H.P. Lovecraft would write."

"I just told my mother about this fort. She got two impressions from it:

- 1) 'That doesn't even sound salvageable.'
- 2) 'Random Primal Horrors would be a great name for a rock band.'"

"I read somewhere that if a cat falls more than 11 stories, it instinctively flares its legs out to increase air resistance. This slows it down enough to stick the landing with relatively minor injuries. In Dwarf Fortress, apparently, cats don't do that."

Prologue

"Ber! Ber Betanlorbam!"

"Do you know why I have dragged you into my throne room."

"Eh...Is it cause ye' caught me in bed with yer daught-"

"Yes! Mr. Betanlorbam!"

"I can explain m' gueen, with a beard like that I coulda' sworn she was a dwarf-"

[&]quot;yes m' queen?"

"Silence! I've put up with your kind for long enough, with your drunken revelry and your unkempt facial hair!"

"yer daughter wishes 'er beard was braided lik-"

"Silence! I'm sparing your miserable little life for now Betanlorbam, perhaps you could show some gratitude."

"Yes oh glorious Led, jewel of the obsidian towers of Graspedseduce, flower of the goblin's grave etc...high strung bit--

"That is why I'm financing your little trip."

"My what?"

"That's right Ber, you're going on a trip, straight to the Blueness of Malodors in fact"

"What're ye' talkin' 'bout ya' crazy broa-?"

"I encourage you to take as many of your brethren with you to start your new dwarven paradise halfway across this Windy world"

"Jus' wait a minut' he-"

"We'll supply you of course, picks, axes, liquor, whatever will get you hairy ragamuffings out of my sigh-"

"ye say ye'll giv' me booze?!"

"ahem. yes."

"I'll do it!"



TURN 1 - ROBOCORN

Battlefailed

Diary of Robocorn Betanlorbam

After a pretty long journey we finally arrived at the place that Led told us to. A pretty queer place really. The grass is all dead an' th' beach has no sand. An' one more thing, when they say th' Blueness of Malodors, they damn well mean it! th' sea stinks of piss n' dead cats. That queen'll be hearin' from me when that dangblasted liaison gets here.

They brave dorfs I brought with me aren't much better. The bastards drank all me booze and one of 'em carved BaTtleFAiLeD int' the side o' th' wagon. Non o' 'em fessed up for it but when we finally arrived here they chose to name the place Battlefailed. I've got th' documents t' prove it.

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You have arrived. After a journey from the Mountainhomes into the forbidding wilderness beyond, your harsh trek has finally ended. Your party of seven is to make an outpost for the glory of all of Dastot Cog. There are almost no supplies left, but with stout labor comes sustenance. Whether by bolt, plow or hook, provide for your dwarves. You are expecting a supply caravan just before winter entombs you, but it is Spring now. Enough time to delve secure lodgings, ere the beasts get hungry. A new chapter of dwarven history begins here at this place, Nokzamungèg, "Battlefailed". Strike the earth!
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I told th' miner, Oglosomething. t' dig out our rooms while some o' the axedwarves made themselves of some use getting us wood from the dead trees surroundin' us. I dinnae know what is supposed to be so scary about this place, just an ordinary plain fulla ordinary elk. What in the blue blazes is that thing?!



The thing jumps on th' doctor Samrek an he takes a good beatin' before Urist an' Oglokoog come to ward th' vile creature off o' him.

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"Samrek' Joyclasp"

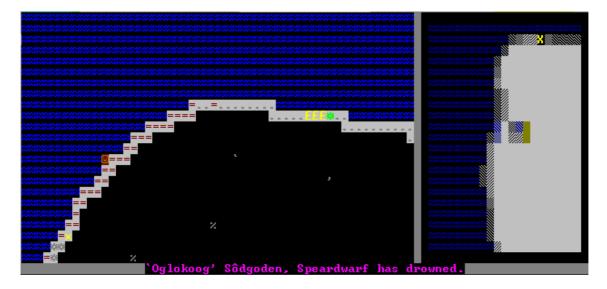
upper body
lower body
head
right upper arm
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upper body
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The two brave dorfs fight the beast but it kicks oglokoog int' th' water. I watch in horror as th' dorf sinks beneath th' waves. It probably would have made no difference whether or not he was actually using his pick, at least he didn't carry it with him to his watery grave.



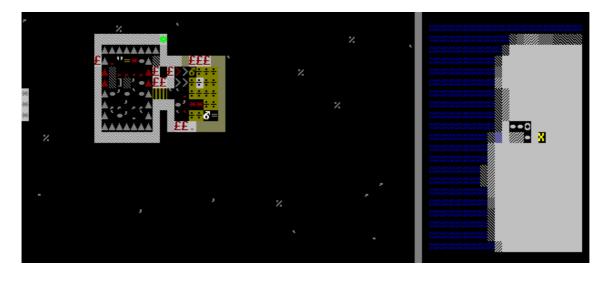
as th' battle goes on heyguys joins the fray. with not a weap'n o' his own he grapples with th' fell beast. Through sheer force of will and the fire in 'is 'eart, he unsurmounted strength and wrestling skill.



With undwarven strength, our humble Maker, unmade mbs th' beast enough t' keep it at bay. and collapsed t' the ground unconscious. Nobody seemd t'think he could use a lift.



Not bein' a miner myself, I hastily dig out a small burrow for us to take refuge in. Oglokoog was th' miner of us. I wonder if I'll get 'is share o' booze...



My damn dwarfs say that th' Skelk that K.O.'d Heyguys is still active an' that it'll get 'em if they get close. I tell Urist t' go take care of it, the psycho seems pretty thrilled about fighting the undead monstrosity.

While they're out fighting the first skelk, a second one runs into th' hole where we currently reside an' starts buttin th' hell out o' the spare dog I brought fer food.



The dog seemed to be doomed but at least it was doomed effectively. Urist is currently laying in th' same spot as heyguys in similar condition having done no damage t' th' skelk.



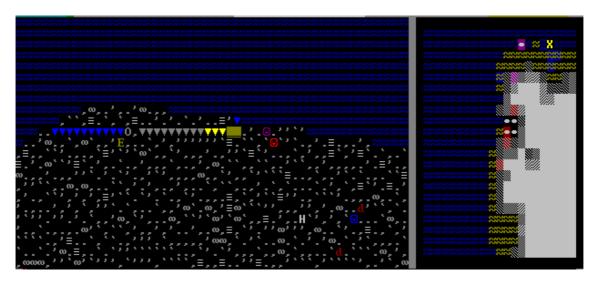
As The battle raging on our front door is scaring Samrek and Andreus away I choose to lead them t' a distant shore t' hide. A good thing too, a horde o' th' abominations comes trottin' out righ' through where we made our camp, chasin' away our heroic dog.



While we hide on th' north part o' th' shore The skelks break into what would have been our domicile.



By the time we're almost done with our protection, a damn skelk comes out o' nowhere and attacks one o' our dogs, scarin' us from th' relative safey we enjoyed.



We make a break fer it to a distant tree in hopes we could avoid th' damned thing. They were becoming kind of a pain.

we arrive hungry and tired and incredibly hung over from not getting a consistent supply o' booze th' whole time.

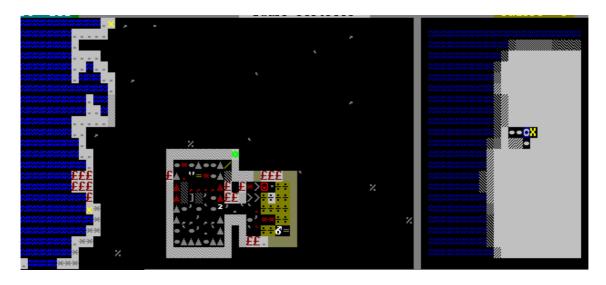
Heyguys an' Urist seem to be fine comparably, enjoying a carefree coma being slowly broken to pieces by the skelks. They seem so blissfully unaware that they haven't eaten or drank in months. Woulda been nice if Urist hadn't brought

th' axe with 'im, could o' used that about now.



The time 'ad come, in a drunken frenzy, we mad a break for th' sweet booze an' toadman brains in the stockpile. It's almost like th' elk were guardin' it th' whole time.

The dwarfs scattered, I dunnae about their craft, but they make good decoys, I at least got t' th' booze.

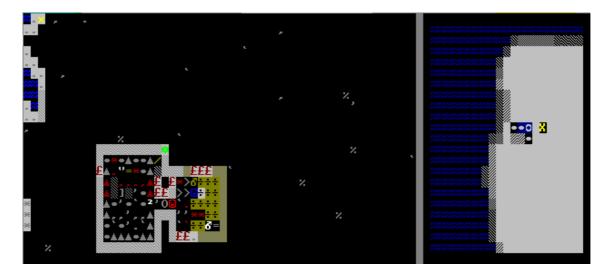


I had fleeting thoughts of walling myself in with th' food...

Maybe not fleeting...

...Well I didn't do that, what would everyone think of me?

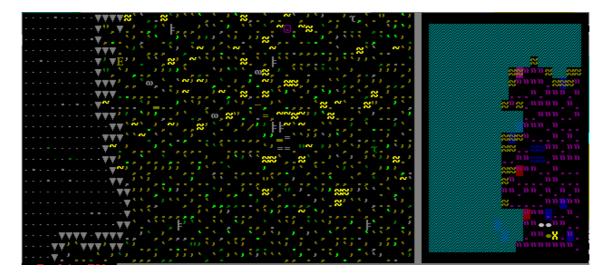
I walled myself in with Krimson!



I hear their footsteps outside. I could really use a good chat with Andreus, I'll just stand here until I can talk to him.

As I've waited in here, Krimson has begun th' construction o' a farm so we can maintain our dwarven lifestyle in the crowded burrow. Soon e'll be saying we should drink from the same mug an' crowd together fer warmth. I ain't buying that, If I swung that way I wouldn't be in this mess. I'll just stand by th' wall.

I think about now Samrek an' Andreus should be constructin' a butchery so as to turn them puppies int' tasty morsels but they keep gettin interrupted woodcuttin' by th' damn skelks. But why would I think that?



Over the following weeks I wait to meet 'em, stopping only from vigilance t' eat. I hear the screams of Andreus as he repeatedly tries to get close t' th' wall only to be chased away by the skelks. I hear the yelping of dogs and the cries of Samrek. I have plenty of food where I am, so it matters not for me, but I cannae help but feign concern.

The second death is Samrek, by dehydration. I dinnae know how, we've got plenty of booze *slurrp*.

Andreus passes from this world also and Krimson throws a tantrum. If by tantrum he means walking

to the stairs and calming down, th' guy 'as pretty mild emotions it seems.

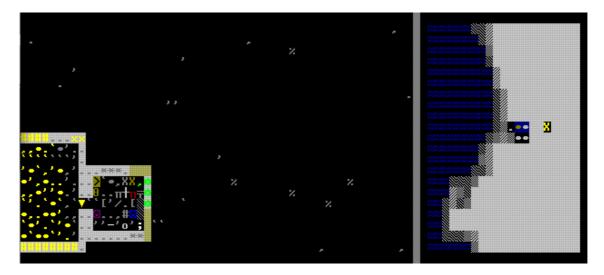
I wonder how Urist an' Heyguys are doing...

Urist the Blue' Zulbananan, 'Heyguys' Ilbesmar, Maker 'Urist the Blue' Bannernigh "'Heyguys' Wordypulley"		
upper body lower body head exhausted head right upper arm left upper arm left lower arm left lower arm right hand left hand right upper leg left upper leg left lower leg left foot left foot	upper body lower body head right upper arm left upper arm left lower arm left lower arm right hand left hand right upper leg left upper leg right lower leg left lower leg right foot left foot	Unconscious Exhausted
right eye Unconscious left eye Exhausted	right eye left eye	Unconscious Exhausted
right ear left ear nose left shoulder right elbow right wrist right hip left hip left knee left ankle throat thumb, right ha thumb, left han	right ear left ear right shoulder left shoulder right elbow left elbow left wrist right hip right knee left knee right ankle throat thumb, right ha	
first finger, r Unconscious first finger, l Exhausted second finger, second finger, third finger, r third finger, l fourth finger, fourth finger, first toe, righ first toe, left second toe, rig second toe, righ third toe, righ third toe, righ third toe, righ	thumb, left han first finger, r first finger, l second finger, second finger, third finger, third finger, l fourth finger, fourth finger, first toe, righ first toe, left second toe, left third toe, left third toe, left	Unconscious Exhausted
first finger, r Unconscious first finger, l Exhausted second finger, second finger, third finger, r third finger, l fourth finger, fourth finger, first toe, righ first toe, left second toe, rig second toe, righ third toe, left fourth toe, left fourth toe, left	second toe, rig second toe, left third toe, left fourth toe, righ fifth toe, righ fifth toe, left left cheek right cheek right eyelid lower lip upper lip upper front too upper right bac lower right bac	Unconscious Exhausted
fourth toe, left fourth toe, righ fourth toe, left fifth toe, left left cheek right cheek left eyelid right eyelid lower lip upper lip upper front too upper right bac lower left back lower left back		

It has come to my attention that our expedition leader Andreus may never be gracin' our humble halls so that I'll never get to have that final conversation with him, I can only hope enshal Dawnfuture delivers this message to him "Do you think Led was born with that stick up 'er bum, or do you think it involved some accident involving a flagpole and fallin' off an obsidian tower?" I wound up getting my booze, but it tastes bitter without someone t' share it with, well krimson's here an' he's a great help, but I dinnae want th' representative from Graspedseduc'd t' get th' wrong impression when he finds our one bed and our brotherly platonic relationship.

Krimson keeps doing this strange thing where he has a tantrum in his sleep. It seems to bother me but since I have yet t' lift a finger since we got down here, I ain't complainin' of his night terrors.

The silly dorf toppled th' mason workshop, he then put it back together. doesn't bother me in the slightest, as long as he cleans up.



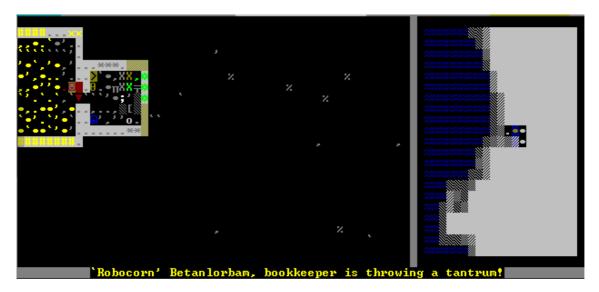
This guy is nuts, he loses his temper constantly an' he takes it out on th' rocks. I'm sure e'll get over it eventually.

The f**ker attacked me, Robocorn ain't takin' this sittin' down! I guess I am now that th' motherf**ker broke both my legs!!



Arright, I can kind o' understand the fist fight, an all th' tension we be havin' bu I'm not really in a situation to do any work at all now, as long as e's alright he should be able to wait on me head and foot. Bastard deserves to.

Stop takin' a f**kin' break an get me t' Th' F**kin' bed!



It's been weeks, th' bastard 'as been takin' 'is break fer weeks. I cannae get up an get a drink an th' bastard win nae carry me t' th' bed a couple o' feet away. Is this how it ends fer me? Alone with this phsycho. Where he'll toil alone in Battlefailed forever and do who knows what to my corpse. I accept my fate fer know, what would motivate a person t' come t' th' Blueness o' Malodors anyway?

Oh boy.

These migrants are th' bet thing that ever happened t' me, they put my ornery bum in bed an' brought another pick an' axe with 'em, they'll not make th' mistakes I did. Though they do seem a bit dissappointed at th' state o' things, they said that Led told them o' a grand dwarven utopia, well, welcome t' Battlefailed.



'Robocorn' Betanlorbam, book
"'Robocorn' Calmstandards"
Throwing a tantrum!. &

Rest
Dabbling Armor User
Dabbling Thrower
Dabbling Fighter
Dabbling Archer
Novice Dodger
Adequate Miner
Competent Mechanic
Adequate Building Designer
Novice Appraiser
Novice Organizer

c: Combat b: Labor m: Misc
g:Gen i:Inv p:Prf w:Wnd z:St
Space: Done

Her upper right back tooth is gone is cinnamon. Her skin is dark tan. agile, but she is susceptible to disease.

'Urist the Blue' Zulbananan likes malachite, steel, maces, cages and dogs for their loyalty. When possible consume dimple cup spawn.

She has an astounding feel for the position of her own She occasionally overindulges. She enjoys the company of others. She rarely happy or enthusiastic. She is guarded in relationships with othe She is organized. She has a sense of duty. She is occasionally given procrastination. She scratches her nose when she's nervous. She ne alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors grumbles only mildly at inclement weather. She doesn't really care ab anything anymore.

Interlude

Robocorn's Vision

Diary of Robocorn Betanlorbam

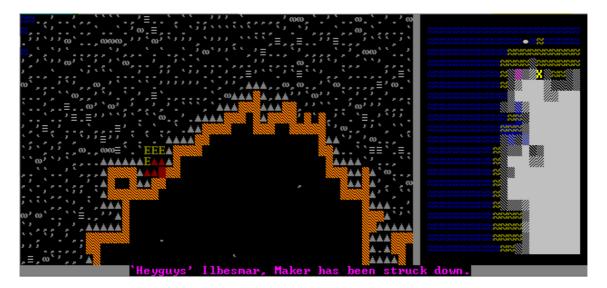
Th' new dwarves are a boon t' me senses, doing all th' work I never planned on doing an' carrying in all th' items we left outside.



It surely is a blessing that something distracted th' skelks so they could all get in. I haven't seen skelk in quite a while. I wonder what happen'd t' all o' them.



A chillran through me spine, Heyguys, who 'ad endured being teabagg't by skelks for no less'n five months 'ad drawn 'is last breath. Let us nau remembra 'im as a pacifist bu' as a man who could be kick'd in th' face fer months on en' an' nau die. I salute ye' Heyguys.

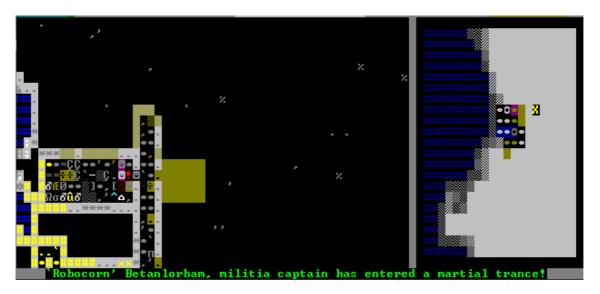


today I found a nice juicy plump helmet in th' food stockpile. I hid it away in a crack in th' wall be'ind a barrel so nobody would get it before me. I'll enjoy it tomorrow with some dwarven wine an' enjoy th' good times.

Diary of interim scribe Erib Shembidok, Fish Dissector

Thah right queer dwarf that was always mumblin' t' 'imself was finally taken out. Fer some reason Krimson wanted me t' make a reprt o' this so I did. He says e'll find someone else t' do it when 'e 'as th' time an' that I be useless cuz there be no fish in th' cave.

So, this righ' mad dorf named Bobbycon or somethin' starts ravin' 'bout how someone touch'd 'is *plump helmet* an' how he was gon o' kill every las' one o' us fer ruinin' 'is day. Th' mad dorf ran t' th' craftworks an' tried t' attack someone so good ol' Krimson decared't everybody 'is Granite Gods an' told us t' stop Robconnel at any cos'. We all ran int' th' romm an' grabb't the sucker an' pulled. Th' guy was strong but there were five o' us. as 'e struggle't, Reg Mafoludar strangle't th' rampagin' psycho until e' fell down dead.



Ev'n afterwards we all felt righ' sorry fer wha' we done, Krimson was th' most sadden't by th' loss o'

'is friend, 'e told us t' make a tomb fer Ropercon cuz 'e deserv'd one an t' clean up th' blood. I think I may come t' enjoy this job, I look forward t' chronicling th' events in Battlefailed



Diary of interim scribe Dîshmab Obokidos, Herbalist

I guess it's my turn t' write everything down, I hope I don't succumb t' th' same fate as that other scribe, why would that happen? He was a useless fish dissector, I'm a herbalist.



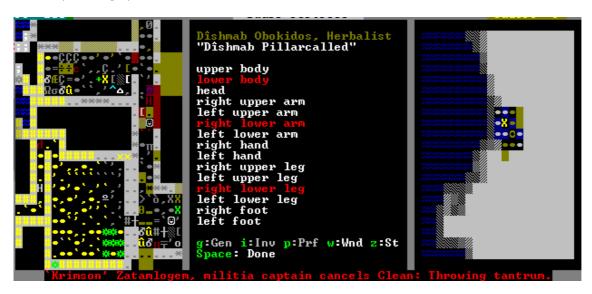
Krimson killed Erib in a fit o' rage after th' death of his secret lover best friend Robocorn. I could personally couldn't care less about either o' them, Erib was a waste o' flesh an that Robocorn guy is responsible for this vile place.

Krimson knocked out Likast before calming down, it must be pretty stressful running this place. He said to make a coffin for Erib too, so he doesn't smell, a wise decision.

I'm a little freaked out now, Krimson struck down Likast in the hall in another fit of rage, maybe we should have that guy quarantined.



These outburst are becoming a little less bearable. The maddwarf broke my arm and leg and is currently beating up Matuin like there's no tomorow.

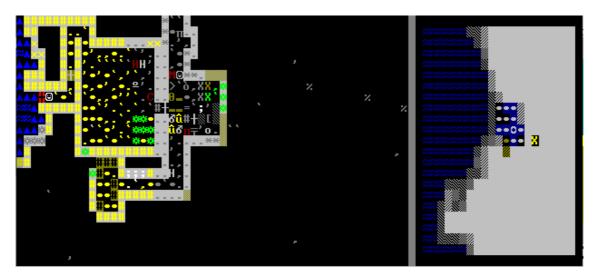


Thankfully he stops short o' killing him before calming down.



With Matuin's vote I've replaced him as militia leader.

As Matuin and I lie on the floor for weeks with major injuries, Krimson puts forth a plan to create arable farmland in our fort, his idea involves flooding it slightly with seawater, When I tell him that not even plump helmets would grow in the sand from the bottom of the blueness of malodors, he just laughs at me and marks the wall anyway.



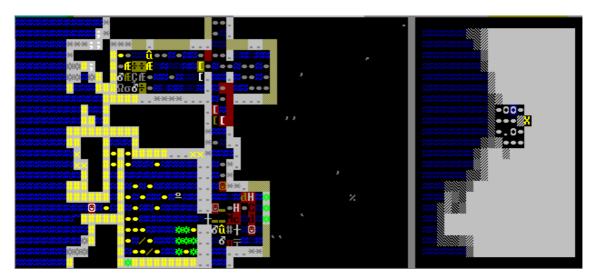
I'm beginning to learn why Likast and Erib are still rotting in the halls, Krimson has been dedicating empty coffins to people I've never even heard of.



It takes longer than I thought for them to put away the corpses, they at least bring Matuin to the bed to heal, somewhere along the line they construct a well to give us water.



Krimson has been having a good day lately, he's ready to flood the farms.



End of interlude

Diary of Robocorn Betanlorbam

I awoke in a hot sweat, I 'ad some terrible dream abou' Krimson killin' me an' half th' migrants before floodin' th' whole damn fortress an' destroyin' all we work't for. It was a big relief when I saw th' guy standin' before me. Krimson 'as always been there fer me an' I nev'r really trust'd th' fella. I think I'll make a change, I'll trust this one dwarf unlike all of th' oth'r dwarves that said they check'd th' still fer toxic bubbles, or said thet were of consentin' age, or assur'd me they weren't really human princesses. I'll put that aside fer Krimson. 'E kin 'ave th' bed.



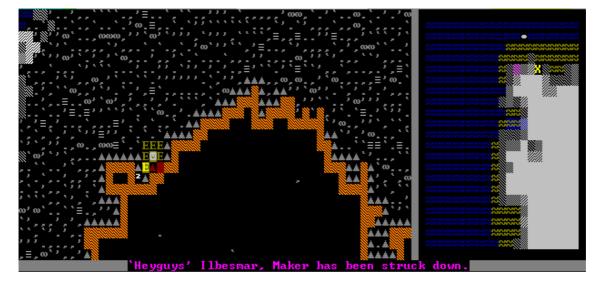
later I saw some daft laddie named Matuin tryin' t' dig t' th' sea t' let th' water in. I dinnae if it were my dream but I told th' bucko t' stop so as not t' kill us all when th' water pressure causes a flood that drowns us all in seconds. told 'im t' go fer the dirt with th' water flowin innit.



While I told th' rest o' 'em t' go collec' th' materials from th' wagon someone built a wall infron' o' 'em I hope they kin get th' wall down afore th' Skelks get 'em. Maybe we should make a drawbridge there instead.



I seem t' get th' impression that me ol' buddy Heyguys 'is no longer among th' living. I feel sad bu' I cannae help but think that this is what 'e would 'ave want'd. As th' goblins say "Gu ek us dotom Mokgaru!" dinnae what it means realleh' but th' queen says it at every funeral so it must be somethin' nice. I'll ded'cate an empty coffin t' 'im 'r somethin'.



As I slowly die o' thirst in me bed I 'ave th' migrants build a well so they can frikkin' give me liquid. after almos' a month th' bugger finally finish it. Water be sour to me ale lovin' lips, but any drink after th' long parchin' is a good one.



I 'ad a few coffins made. Th' ones fer Heyguys an' Oglokoog are purely symbol'c as I wouldn't risk my life t' fish a corpse outta th' sea or wrestle a skelk for one. Samrek an' our original leader Andreus 'r in their tombs tho, may their souls rest'n peace, as th' goblins say "Obu os-usp, emxa-los!"



God's beard! look at all th' fish! If only we could catch these morsels we'd never 'ave t worry about food ever agin! alas they be under th' sea where no dwarf dare get at 'em.



Th' drawbridge 's finally up'n runnin and work'd by a lever craft'd by Matuin, I feel safer already. we kin lower th' bridge in case th' damn skelks ever get us corner'd some other way.



The works been going fine, I dinnae know what I'd do without these bless'd dwarfs. And ye know, between th' velvet lies, theres a truth that's 'ard as steel, the vision never dies, life's a nev'rendin' wheel...yeah...

Diary of interim scribe Erib Shembidok, Fish Dissector

I dinnae wha' I'm soppos't t' write in th' log but Krimson tells me tha' i's me duty t' do so so I do my duty an' write in this darn diary. I sure don' got any fish t' dissec'!

I slep' righ' through th' whol' thing but I rememb'r th' fellas talkin' 'bout th' dwarf who always slept in th' hospital bed goin' crazy an' attackin' th' fort. wha' both'rs me is tha th' faker got t' sleep fer months when 'e could really walk.



Krimson told us t' stop 'im at any cost. I dinnae wha' really 'append but Krimson was righ' sad today. Th' poor dorf carry'd th' berserk dorf, Rondocore I think, t' 'is grave. lat'r I saw 'im burnin a 'andful o' dwarven rum while cryin'. I wus gonna chastize 'im fer wastin' booze but I 'eard from Rith that

Krimson kill'd a dorf an' that 'e was dang'rous.

I dinnae if I kin trus' Krimsin anymore, th' dorf punches me out an' 'alf kills a 'orse before decidin' evrythin's okay, I dinnae understan' a' all.

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Stray Horse (Tame)

upper body
lower body
lower body
right front leg
left front hoof
right rear leg
left rear leg
right rear hoof
left rear hoof
left rear hoof
left rear hoof
tail

g:Gen i:Inv p:Prf w:Wnd z:St
Space: Done

Krimson' Zatamlogem, Miner has calmed down.
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Th' fort 'as righ' expand'd since tha' bum Rabiecop died, Krimsin made a new hospital fer th' injured dorfs an is workin' on th' farmlan' an tryin' t' get us a dinin' 'all. I can almost fergiv'm fer burnin' that booze. Tha's unfergiv'ble.



Krimsin's a genius! 'is plan t' flood th' farms with groun' water work'd! I bet that ol' cripple Roponcorps couldn't o' thought o' that one, bet 'e would o' tried t' drill a 'ole inna th' sea. Tha's why Krims'n's in charge. Still cannae trust 'im round booze tho, guy's a pyr'maniac.

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a: View Announcements
b: Building r: Reports
c: View Civilizations
d: Designations o: Set Order
k: Look Around j: Job List
m: Military s: Squads
N: Points/Routes/Notes
w: Define Burrows
p: Stockpiles i: Zones
q: Set Building Tasks/Prefs
R: View Rooms/Buildings
t: View Units h: Hot Keys
n: Nobles and Administrators
z: Status
Tab: Move this menu/map
?: Help Escape: Options
;: Movies D: Depot Access

Space: Pause
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A few newcom'rs arrive'd today, Cog Sexyracks, Stukos Metalballs, Thîkut Dankpants, an' a whole bunch o' others, an some kid named Shamebirth, err shamebrith, which means Handlebell, must get a lotta flak fer 'is name's subtle anagram in 'uman.



Today, Krimson as well as both th' new parties declar'd today, limestone 23. t' be Uristfest, dedicat'd t' our noble savior without whom we wouldn't 'ave been able to get by without being attack'd by skel'tal elk. We're 'avin a shrine ded'cated t' Urist in th' fort, t tell urist we lov 'im even though 'e's likely been braindead fer months.

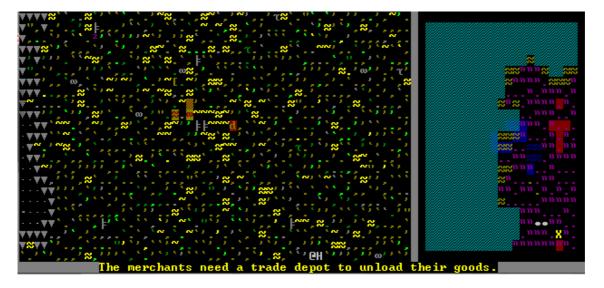


Great Urist th' Immortal died. Our cel'bration 'as end'd an our safty 'as been put at risk. th' skelks 'ave been freed. from their 'ypnosis an are returnin' t' th' field's Battlefailed is in danger once more. I dinnae think tha' skelks are so dang'rous, bu' Krimson sez they be so I righ' lissen.

Th' thing is, th' Skelk jus' left after Urist died. They were replac'd by muskoxen, not zombie muskoxen, regular muskoxen. It seems t' be th' time t' put urist an' 'eyguys t' bed.

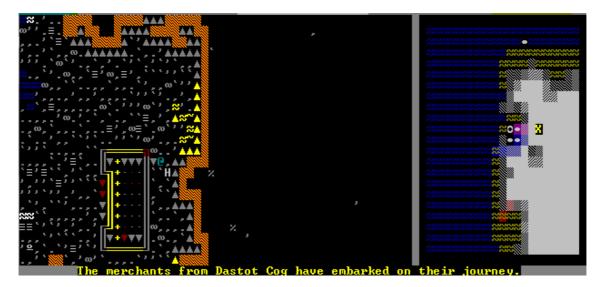


A group o' merchan's actualy come 'ere, everyone's so excit'd tha' we put up a gran' ol' depot righ' mou'side our door.



We dinnae 'ave any goods produc'd so we hockdsome o th' stuff we found on th' corpses o' our forebearers. Samrek won' miss 'is gloves. in exchange we bough' some food an' a cage t' keep all these cats in. there nau be many nae but there will be if we dinnae work preemptivleh.

aroun' our entrance we made a wall t' keep ou' th' skel'tals. We haven't seen any since th' skelks, bu' I cannae imagine a better place t' find death than the blueness o' malod'rs.



How it got in I dinnae know but there's a skeltal buzz'rd in th' lobby attakin' a dog. Th dorfs 'r scrambled t' take 't out.



Our crak'd team o' dorfs who wernt fightin' dorfs a min'te ago sprung int' action an' broke th' buzz'rd flat in a secon'. Jus' t' be safe we closed th' hatches t' th' outside.



The undead buzz'rd swarm outside but cannae get in due t' our fortifications. In my dreams I've been hearin' a voice, I could use a talk with a expedition leader, but there nau be one 'ere. I guess I'll have t' do as th' goblins say. "ngukak mok-ozod." sometimes I wish tha' so many goblin phrases 'adn't been adopted by our dorf culture, but their whimsical phrases seem t' be all tha's left o' 'em so I dinnae 'arbor any ill feelin's aginst 'em. Only Krimsin, fer burnin' good booze.

Th' voice 'as been stayin' with me. say 'e's Andreus th' former leader of Battlefail'd, it cannae be true, Andreus is dead. th' voice tells me t' take control o' th' fort. I need 'elp.

I kin 'ear th' voice when I be awake now. It tells me orders, I cannae excape 't.

As th' year comes t' an en', th' voice becomes loud'r, sometimes it can move me arm aginst me will. I dinnae want t' tell ye what it makes me do.

I fell meself slippin' away, cannae sleep or Andreus takes control. Cannae let that 'appen.

I cannae be 'elp'd, I cannae hol' on fer any longer. As th' goblins say "Que sera, sera." tha's goblins righ'? This may be my las-



TURN 2 - ANDREUS

The skelks, the sorcerer and the magnetite

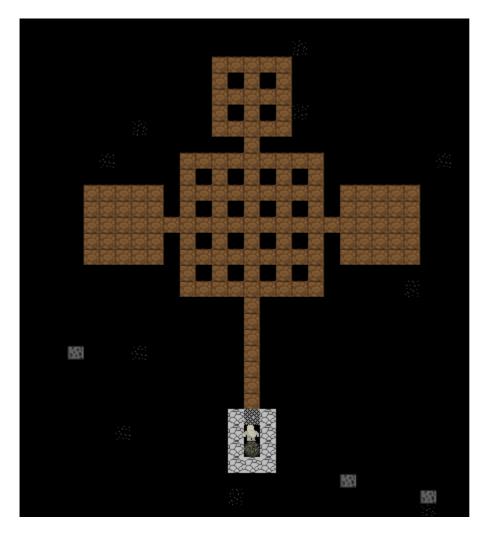
Erib Shembidok #Erib Plankacts Mind Slave of Andreus *crash of thunder*

Andreus IIm Shembidok Magister of the First Circle

It has begun.

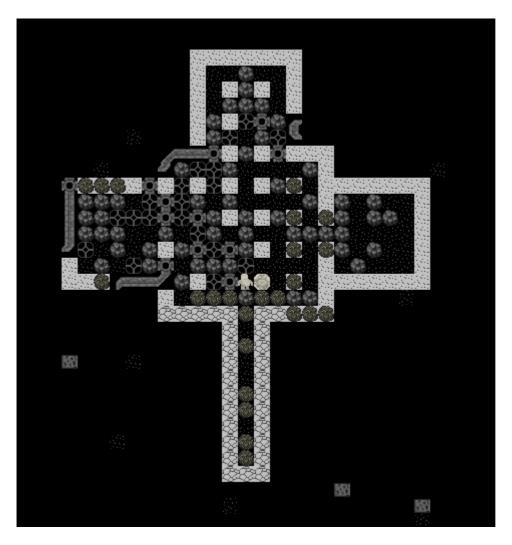
4th Granite, 502

Having successfully recorporialised, I must turn my attention to the construction of a sanctum suitable for my research. A deep vein of magnetite sits just beneath the lowest level of the fortress - the natural magnetism of the rocks will shield me from detection



19th Slate, 502

Migrants have apparently arrived. I care little for these nobodies except in that they may assist with the speedy construction of my sanctum, which is progressing... acceptably. The space has been excavated according to my specifications and the stoneworkers have begun their work on the walls and the decor. The furniture is being sorted, and soon I shall order the statues built from the excavated magnetite.



20th Slate, 502

Incompetent and worthless blunderers! No sooner had I placed the orders for the smelting of the magnetite than I am informed by one of the stinking peons that occupies this godsforsaken hole that our supplies of alcohol are critically low.

```
Food Stores: 200?

Meat 10 Seeds 40?

Fish 20? Drink 9

Plant 100? Other None
```

So, being possessed of vast intelligence and foresight, I did what any sensible sorcerer would do in this situation.

```
Andreus II Shembidok Magi

Andreus II Plankacts

Rest
```

I slacked off and let some other berk take care of it.

Samzuls Azink⊕buk Distracted Carpenter

Today I was accosted by a most peculiar dwarf by the name of Samzul. He seemed unable to concentrate on anything for more than a few seconds. This is exceptionally irritating as the fool's meant to be sorting out barrels to fix our alcohol issues and cages for my project. I swear that ever since my fourth corporealisation I've been surrounded by bad luck and imbeciles.

8th Felsite, 502

Curses! A skeletal buzzard has penetrated the fort's defences, and-



Hold on, is that thing being taken down by a donkey?

```
upper body
lower body
head
right upper leg
left upper leg
right lower leg
right lower leg
right foot
left foot
right wing
left wing
```

Goddamn.

19th Felsite, 502

A elven caravan from Fisomawada has arrived

Elves have arrived. Finally, some worthwhile company.

25th Felsite, 502

Trading with the elves has provided us with sufficient wood, alcohol and food to keep us going, at least until the summer. This is good, because I have no desire to micromanage these idiots while I recuperate from injuries recently sustained in my research.

28th Hematite, 502

Yet another wagon in the parade of constant interruptions! A herd of zombie muskox have been sighted near the fortress. I have dispatched the militia squad, the Pointy Torches, consisting of miner Krimson and carpenter Samzul and a to take care of them - hopefully they will not fail me as pitifully as the previous commander, who lies dying on the floor of Battlefailed's entryway.

1st Malachite, 502

Kogan Idenn*r Gem Cutter has been possessed!

A presence stirs the stale air of this fortress - these fools are oblivious to it, yet I can feel it - from whence did it come, and what does it want? It has ensconced itself in the weak mind of one of the dwarves. I shall have to monitor this situation carefully.

Kogan Idenn'r has claimed a Jeweler's Workshop

2nd Malachite, 502

Well, fuck.



I feel it likely that Krimson is equally doomed. I have ordered all dwarves to take refuge inside the fortress and the doors to be sealed. We shall consider our next move... carefully.

6th Malachite, 502

```
Kogan Idenn*r* Gem Cutter has created N*rzakgol* a chrysoprase window!
```

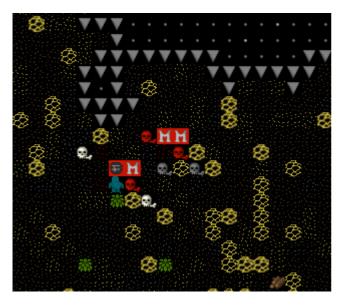
Some good news for a change. The presence that claimed one of the dwarves seemed to be a relatively benign spirit of creativity. Such beings occasionally take hold of the minds of suitably weak-willed individuals and inspire them to create grand works of art - such is their nature. While not the most impressive creation the world has ever seen, this window is certainly pretty.

```
This is a chrysoprase windows All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encrusted with chrysoprases
```

I shall have it placed in my study without delay.

7th Malachite, 502

Well fuck me sideways.



Some migrants have arrived

Not only is Krimson not dead, not only did he slay an entire herd of zombie muskox, but he came banging on the gates of the fortress demanding that we let him in because he's bringing a wave of migrants in tow. Perhaps I was wrong. Perhaps the dwarves of this fortress are not entirely worthless.

8th Malachite, 502

Through my attunement to the area, I sense that one of the fortress animals is feeling disquieted. I shall commune with-

Ed&m Dalzattun Cat (Tame) cancels Clean Self: Interrupted by Skeletal Horse

Krimson Zatamlogem Swordsdwarf has drowned

\$%&£\$£\$@!!!

1st Sandstone, 502

Some migrants have arrived

Why do people continue turning up at this godforsaken hole? This must be how the great doomfortresses of legend like Boatmurdered and Sparkgear got started - dwarves coming to some godsforsaken pit out of sheer bloody-minded stupidity. I hope my research provides me with what I seek, or, in the absence of an immediate result, a body less... repulsive. I *despise* these creatures.

11th Sandstone, 502

This place has gone from bad to worse since the new migrants arrived. These filthy, drunken inbreds spend all of their time throwing celebrations and wasting the alcohol that was set aside on a strictly rationed basis to deal with the curious biological dependency which this depraved species possesses for it. The wounds I took recently have healed - perhaps I will not need to recorporealise again as soon as I had anticipated.

21st Timber, 502

Our immediate problems seem to be at an end. A dwarven caravan arrived and its guardians fought off the herd of undead horses that had been blighting our settlement, and they had many goods to trade with us. It would be excellent if we had an official broker, but needs must. I think things are finally looking-

Lorbam Amudgusil® Weaver cancels Drink: Interrupted by Skeletal Elk®

ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME?!

16th Moonstone, 502

The forest titan Ecen Omlistren Tuma Lubbe has come! A huge scaly thrips It has a twisting jointed trunk and it moves about carelessly Its azure scales are jagged and overlapping Beware its fire!

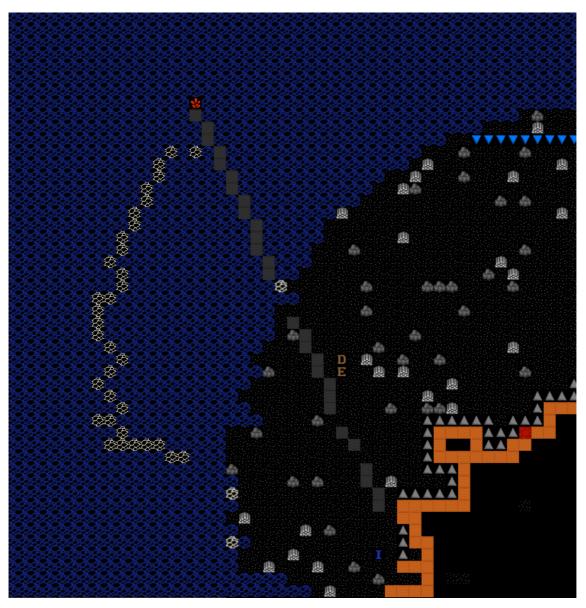
Press Enter to close window

Alright. That does it.

I'm going to seal the fortress and pray for a quick death.



Cerol Shamebrith Dwarven Child has gone berserk!



The militia commander grabs The Dwarven Child by the first toes right foot with his right upper arm!

The Dwarven Child stands upstands to the Dwarven Child!

The Dwarven Child looks surprised by the ferocity of The militia commander charges at The Dwarven Child!

The militia commander punches The Dwarven Child in the left upper leg with his right hands bruising the fat through the (cave spider silk cloak)!

The militia commander collides with The Dwarven Child!

The militia commander punches The Dwarven Child in the lower body with his right hands bruising the fat through the (cave spider silk cloak)!

The militia commander punches The Dwarven Child in the lower body with his right hands bruising the fat through the (cave spider silk cloak)!

The militia commander releases the grip of The militia commander's right upper arm on The Dwarven Childs first toos right foots.

The militia commander punches The Dwarven Child in the right upper arm with his right hands bruising the muscle through the (cave spider silk cloak)!

The Dwarven Child stands upstands.

The	militia	commander	strangles	The	Dwarven	Childs	throat!	x 2
The	militia	commander	strangles	The	Dwarven	Childs	throat!	x 4
		commander						x 2
		commander						
		commander						ж 2
		commander						
		commander						x 2
		commander						
		commander						
		commander						
		commander						
		commander						
		commander						x 2
		commander						ж 3
		commander						
		commander					throat!	
Cer	ol Shamel	orith Dwar	ven Child	has	suffocat	t e d		

1st Granite, 503

This entire expedition has been a disaster, right from its beginning. I have sealed myself in the sanctum and made preparations for my consciousness to leave this body, as I imagine will be neccessary in the very immediate future. I have instructed the remaining dwarves who have not succumbed to madness or despair that one of them must now lead the fortress. That was merely a formality - I doubt that anyone here has the intelligence to last through the next few months, let alone save this fortress.

TURN 3 – URIST IMIKNORRIS

Six angry gits and three loonies

Diary of "Urist the Blue the Immortal the Second," Bone Carver

A crippled fish dissector who calls himself Andreus II told me that I was in charge of the fortress until further notice. I immediately took stock of our situation. We have a raving maniac standing next to what looks like an empty swimming pool, a rough chrysoprase in our water source, loads of useless shit in our entrance, no trade depot in sight, a perfectly smooth chamber at the lowest level of the fort, eighteen dwarves total, seven of whom are angry bearded bastards, four dwarves bedridden with injuries, two nutcases (counting the one already mentioned), so many dead it's funny, and to top it all off, there's a giant firebreathing bug going for a dip in the ocean. I can see why that fishguy wanted out. Did I mention there's a skeletal horse in a cage near the blood-soaked butcher's workshop?

One of the brewers is currently doing unspeakable things to a mule.

TURN 4 - MATUIN

This is why we can't have nice things

Journal of Matuin

1st Slate, 504

I praise Otik every day that I survive in this hellish place. It is by his grace I am alive to write these words down.

She is an ardent worshipper of Otik the Blueness of Flickers.

Battlefailed has lived up to its name: we have failed time and time again to fend off the skeletal beasts that ravage this land. The only reason we haven't been overrun is the human caravan that rolled through recently, bringing redeath to all that stood on the surface world. The previous ruler of the fortress sealed us off from the outside world (a good move), simultaneously sealing the fate of everyone on the surface. Now only we nine survive:

```
Athel Astnônub, Mason's Guild Drink
Cog Ledevost, Mason's Guild Store Item in Stockpile
Urist The Blue II' Idenbasen, Bonovorker
Drink
Dîshmab Obokidos, Farmer's Guild Rest
Ral Athelurus, Farmer's Guild Sleep
Kogsak Sazirvucar, Farmer's Guild Plant Seeds
'Matuin II' Nokzamfeb, Badass Rest
Lokum Kikrostudib, Hauler's Guild Rest
```

I've separated the survivors into squads (They call them guilds for some reason). Each guild has its own tasks that, hopefully, will return our fortress to some of its glory.

My first order of business is to bury our dead. Those above ground will have to rot, as I dare not take on the skeletal horses myself.

20th of Granite, 504

We've almost reached the fortress of Battlefailed. The other immigrants are excited, as our journey has been long and hard. Many perished, only we 20 remain. Finally some rest for a change...

28th of Granite, 504

As we crested the dunes that shielded Battlefailed from view, my heart sank.

The entire landscape is littered with corpses. There isn't a living thing in sight. At first we thought the fortress had been overrun. I prepared for the worst. Just as we turned to leave, however, the ground opened up and two dwarves rushed out to greet us. Ha! The fortress had been hidden this whole time, what dwarven genius!

29th of Granite, 504

This fortress is a mess.

I am the only person willing to mine in this entire place, so I have begun excavating areas for expanding the fortress' living areas. Currently everything is crammed into 3-4 rooms, which makes this place uncomfortable to live in. This brings me to my next point...

As we cannot go outside and no one wants to work, I have set the entire fortress to begin smoothing and cleaning our current living areas. It is undwarvenly to live in such filth!

(Picks are unforbidden, my Therapist doesn't work with this version so I have designated the labors in game. No idea why they wont, none of the new migrants will pick them up either.)

30th of Granite, 504

It seems we have a problem with skeletal beasts around these parts, so I have drafted 9 of my fellow immigrants into the military. This will give them something worthwhile to do while the others clean.

20th of Slate, 504

Kigok be praised! Following my example, Urist and Andreus, the lazy dwarves who refused to mine, have begun excavation with me! This is great news indeed.

We've begun to dig out a new food stockpile near the dining area, as well as expand that dining area. Two tables is not enough for 29 dwarves to eat at, I don't care how friendly we are.

I have designated a new crypt. It seems one of the previous rulers had dug out some laboratory below the fortress. As we don't need it, I have moved many of the corpses to it. One of the rooms is being filled with coffins to keep the rotting dead from smelling up the place.

28th of Felsite, 504

The elven caravan has arrived. We need cloth badly, as we have several wounded in our hospital, so I have constructed a trade depot and our militia prepares to charge the Zelks outside our door. Kigok save us.

29th of Felsite, 504

We are victorious! The Pointy Torches, though their commander has been bed ridden for as long as I have been in Battlefailed, charged through our gates and into the mass of Zelks. A hideous battle ensued, but only one wrestler was injured. The elves, who stood by and watched (presumably peeing on their skirts) are approaching the fortress now.

30th of Felsite, 504

Due to a mishap in the trade depot, the elven merchant refused to trade with us. So, our militia seized everything they had. I won't put up with any of this "Save the forest!" bullshit.

TURN 5 – SAMTHERE

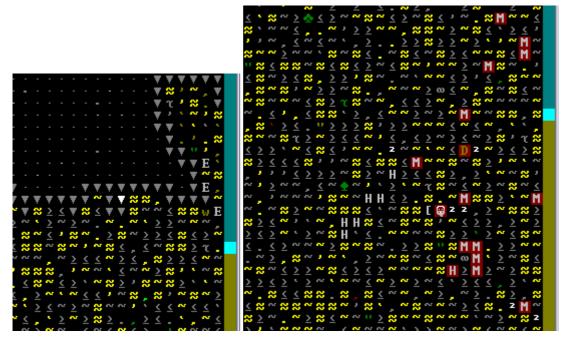
Fishy sacrifices

Diary of Samrist

I arrive in Summer - an unusual time for a guardian to be called, but it seems the overseer just couldn't handle the stress.

Pools of blood and corpses litter the landscape. With time stopped for those below me, I take a while to get my bearings, and to learn the fortress. It's a sprawling mess, dug carelessly out of necessity. The residents aren't even sure what to consider an actual part of the fortress!

Some elves gather worriedly about the perimeter of my influence. They'll likely make a meal for a nearby group of zombie horses.



The dwarves have been working on a trade depot, and finished it yesterday. The elves rushed in, avoiding the zombie horses.

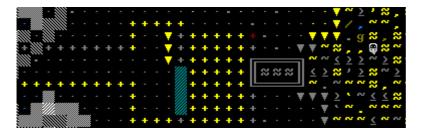
Matuin peddles the clothes of our dead for various goods.

```
'Matuin', Miner
"'Matuin'"

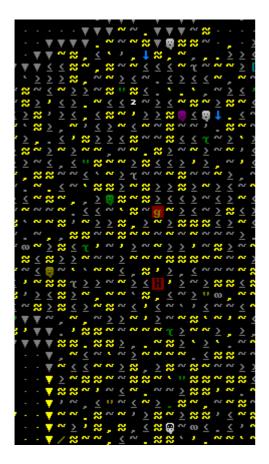
Irade at Depot
Expert Miner
Competent Animal Caretaker
Novice Building Designer
Novice Dyer
Proficient Appraiser
```

He says he knows all the prices now, but refuses to value the fortress' goods. No matter, I'll just have to guide trade more carefully.

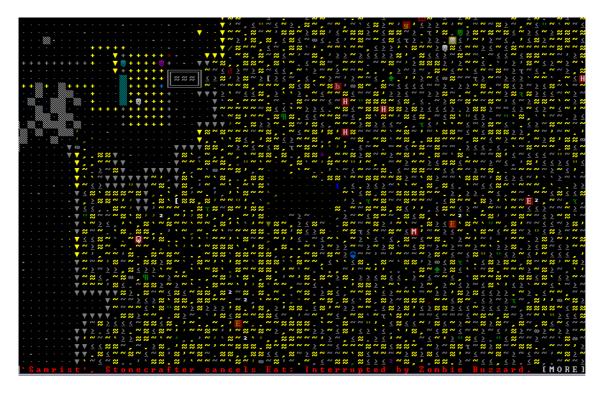
Having looked into the records and seeing the abilities of 'skelks', I question the fortress' defenses. I inspire the creation of an extra wall and a bridge. The seas are teaming with anchovy, so a the construction of a fishing platform begins. The masons get distracted by groundhog skeletons.



The militia run out and make short work of the creatures with their bare hands. The dwarves are glad it was nothing more deadly.



Zombie and skeletal buzzards soar into the fortress from above, looking for food and interrupting our masons. A few of them steal berries from the corpse of a trader's pack animal - they're the lucky ones.



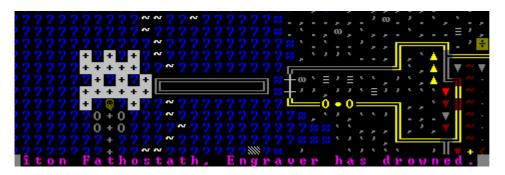
Again, the militia show them no respect and separate them forcibly.

Humans come to trade. We have plenty of alcohol and food, so weaponry is the only thing of interest to us right now. They bring no useful weaponry.



A few bars of various metals are traded for the silken finery of a dead dwarf.

The dwarves decide to start building the fishing platform from the bridge, where they cannot secure it. A floor crumbles away beneath its creator's feet, and he falls to the ocean floor.

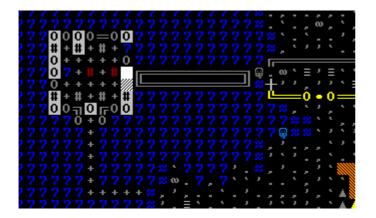


How careless.

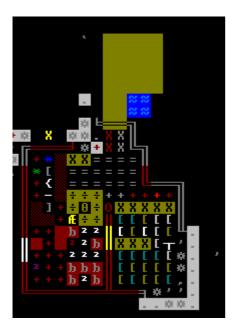
It seems I'll have to be more careful to cover for these dwarves' stupidity. A second has fallen into the water. He was of no great importance, but his death is a blessing. A school of rays gather to feed on his corpse, directly beneath the fishing platform.

When it's complete, perhaps we should throw sacrifices into the water occasionally to draw out the fish.

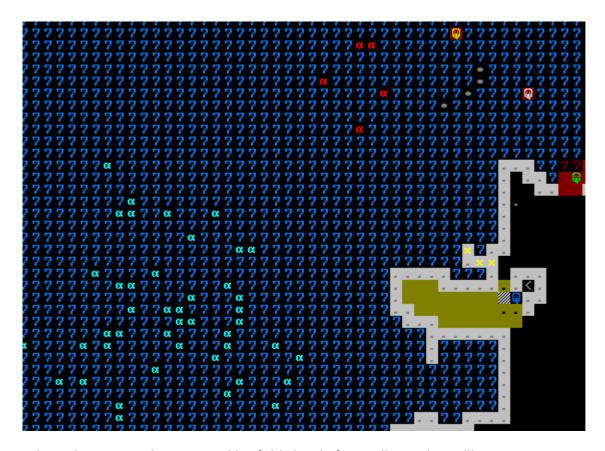
Autumn comes. The fishing platform is nearly finished.



There are not enough beds. Everyone sleeps in the hospital, or on the floor. I order a dormitory dug out, and a carpentry workshop built.

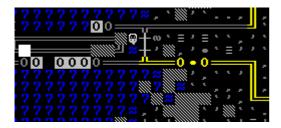


More, more, more fish! They swarm towards the corpses.



Salmon, herrings, anchovies, rays, blue fish! The platform will snag them all!

Skelks and zelks come to piss me off, rushing over the bridge before I realise they're here. A dwarf runs away onto the fishing bridge, and I lock the door telekinetically.



I laugh at the fool as he bangs on the door, not realising that if he were allowed out he would make a tasty meal for an undead elk.



The militia gank them and suffer minor injuries. The militia commander is hospitalised with several wounds, and a gem setter who couldn't run fast enough joins him. I wear the antlers to the hospital and do a kooky dance to scare the patients. For some reason, they don't find it funny.

Freaks.

Zan Cattennekol, Weaver is taken by a fey mood!

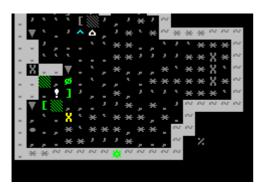
We have no clothier's workshop, so I tell an engraver at dinner to build one. He agrees immediately, and wanders off.

I catch him a while later, and he tells me he was about to do it after he dumped some stones. I tell him to stop dumping stones.

He decides to reorganise the fortress' stockpiles. I tell him to stop reorganising the fortress' stockpiles.

He thinks there's plenty of time to build the workshop later, so he goes to carve some sculptures. I kick him in the face.

He builds the workshop.



```
Zan Cattennekol, Weaver has created Bekaramem
Babinkan, a rope reed fiber face veil!
```

```
Bekaramem Babinkan, "Dipourls the Friendly Tiredness", a rope reed fiber for the siscission of the highest quality. It is decorated with rope reed fiber. It is made from rope reed fiber of the state o
```

I shall be sure to remember this if I ever need to hide my beautiful face.

A caravan arrives and is immediately beset by undead horses. The human fortress liaison takes one look at the landscape, squeals like an elf and runs away.



The caravan guards distract the horses while the traders rush to the depot.

Over the last month I've had the miners digging straight down, deep into the bedrock. I thirst for delicious magma. They finally spotted something promising.

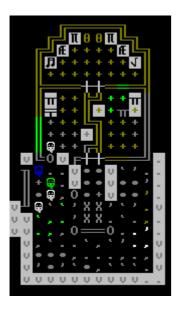


The fishing platform is complete and secure.



The only thing that ignores its defenses are waves, which merrily flow straight through the walls.

My living quarters are nearly complete! When they are finished, they'll be fit for such a handsome and chiselled spirit as myself.

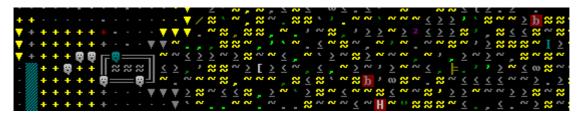


In my infinite generosity, I order a statue chamber carven nearby, so that I may hold parties without venturing far. The magnificent window will be installed there, instead of my room, that all may enjoy it.

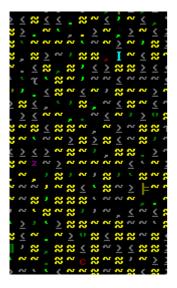
Ah, Winter! A refreshing season, don't you think? We can all afford to relax a little in Winter. We traded with the dwarven caravan for various armour and weaponry, some cheese, some seeds, etc etc yada yada I wasn't paying too much attention to the details.

Great. A giant, blind bug named Guzzlebones. Apparently it doesn't move by accident.

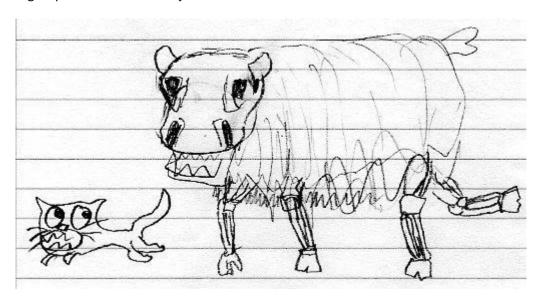
The dwarves gather on the bridge to meet it. Naturally, they ignore all of the new weapons and armour we just bought.



It 'deliberately' gets distracted and starts to chase a cat. The dwarves hold fast.



A group of undead muskox join the chase!



A stream or rhesus macaques come along to steal whatever they can from us. No problem, right? The dwarves are guarding the only entrance.

WRONG.

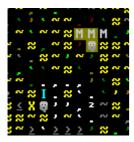
Some of the dwarves chase macaques into the middle of the muskox.



One brave fellow faces the titan head-on, and beats it silly.



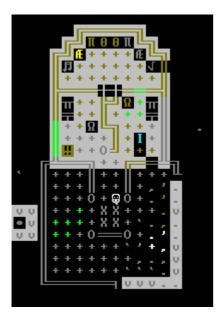
The other guy still has four or five undead muskox kicking the crap out of him.



While the rest of the militia is still distracted by the monkeys:



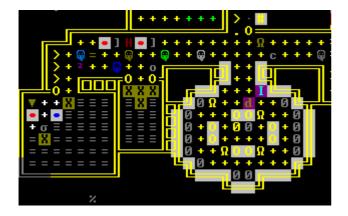
Guzzlebones takes the opportunity to ignore all of the nearby soldiers (damn blind critter), run into the fortress and BREAK MY BEDROOM. THE BASTARD.



I will make it pay.

Guzzlebones goes on a rampage and merrily charges around the place, breaking down workshops and statues and doors.

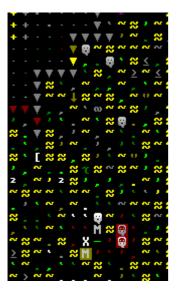
It goes to the tomb and a dog tries to kill it. The dog doesn't do too well.



The militia finally finish up top and make short work of it.



Then they go to help out with the muskox, who have spent the whole time stomping a couple of dwarves into the ground.

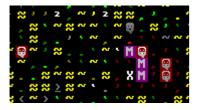


Led Conjuredmined is sporting the Battlefailed national dress:

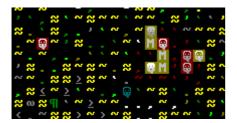
```
Led Tusungavuz, Elite Wrestl
"Led Conjuredmined"

upper body
lower body
lower body
head
right upper arm
left upper arm
left lower arm
left lower arm
left hand
left hand
right upper leg
left upper leg
right lower leg
right lower leg
left shoulder
left foot
right eye
left ear
nose
right shoulder
left shoulder
left shoulder
left tower
left tower
left elbow
left elbow
left wrist
left hip
right knee
right ankle
left ankle
throat
third finger,
first toe, righ
third toe, left
left cheek
right cheek
```

I severely underestimate the muskox and send in a few more new recruits.



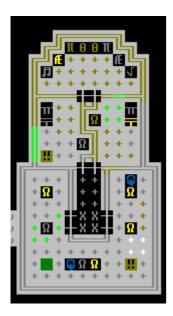
Injuries for everyone! Yay! Most of the militia is going to die. A few soldiers manage to peel away/regain consciousness and get back into the fortress.



Well... screw it. I order the bridge raised and go off to get drunk.



By the end of Winter, the statue room was done! Complete with sexy window and undead-horse-in-a-box.



Spring comes around, and I no longer hold sway over the minds of the citizens. It seems there's some powerful reason Spring is the traditional season for guardians to be called.

I leave Battlefailed to its fate, in the hands of some other spirit, or maybe one of its residents.

TURN 6 – OGLOKOOG

Raw microline! Curse the miners!

Diary of Oglokoog

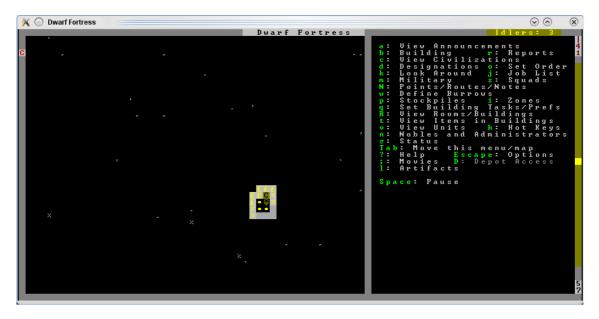
1st Granite, 505

I have arrived to this god-forsaken hellhole they call a fortress. I have to admit, I actually expected something really horrible, but the worst thing I noticed at first glance were the two soldiers left of what seemed to have been a pretty sizable force fighting (if it could really be called such) a herd of zombie and skeletal muskoxen just outside the main gate.

A metalsmith organized a party and I am going to have to assume he held it in my honor, because in any other case, he's being ungrateful - his braver brethren are fighting and dying above and he's having fun as if it's no big deal...

6th Granite, 505

I have noticed that there are several open entrances to the underground caverns in the central staircase. This is a security oversight, albeit a minor one - even though my inspection revealed no flying creatures in the caverns, some could appear at any given time and even a mere giant cave swallow can cause a catastrophe if it is let to roam a fortress' halls unchecked.



I have floored over one of the breaches, but I am sure there are more. I will have to look to that later.

12th Granite, 505

Most of the unwounded dwarves are partying. Everyone is having a great time, except for the cripples in their beds and the two brave soldiers above...



One brave soldier.

20th Granite, 505

I have noticed that the farm plots on one of the upper levels don't seem like they are being used. I asked one of the farmers why that is and he couldn't tell me. All he said is that "we just can't farm there, sir". It's weird, but I am not going to be stopped by something so minor - I have immediately ordered the miners to dig out a new area that we can farm in. A murky pool will serve well as a water source.



24th Granite, 505

The miners have dug out the new farms and they now sit around doing nothing, just as the rest of the fortress. I have noticed that while the staircase does go very deep indeed, the shaft still doesn't reach the magma that's bound to be down there somewhere. I have thus ordered the miners to dig deeper.

27th Granite, 505

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Page 1/1

Duarf Fortress

Page 1/1

It has started raining.
Led Tusingavuz, Elite Wrestler has been struck down.
The weather has cleared.

You have struck cassiferite!
You have struck orthoclase!
Digging designation cancelled: warm stone located.
You have discovered a great magna sea.

Raw adamantine! Praise the miners!

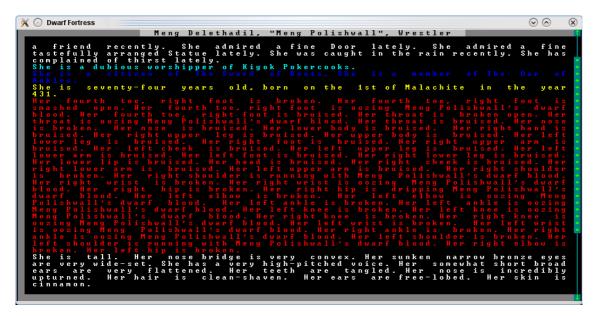
2: Zoon to location

Announcement Date: 27th Granite, 505
```

Great.

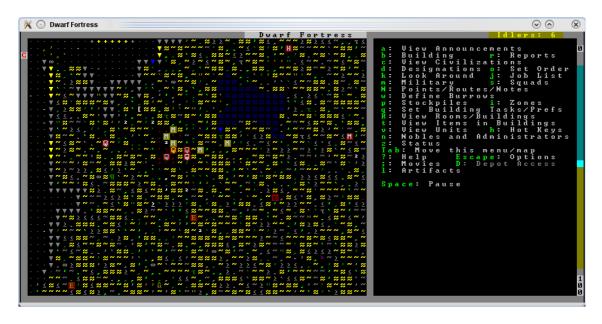
2nd Slate, 505

The last soldier up there is still alive. The muskoxen seem to be torturing her to death, slowly, but surely.



4th Slate, 505

The soldier died of a multitude of various wounds. The muskoxen, victorious but having been dealt a severe beating themselves, crawled away, satisfied. Soulless beasts...



7th Slate, 505

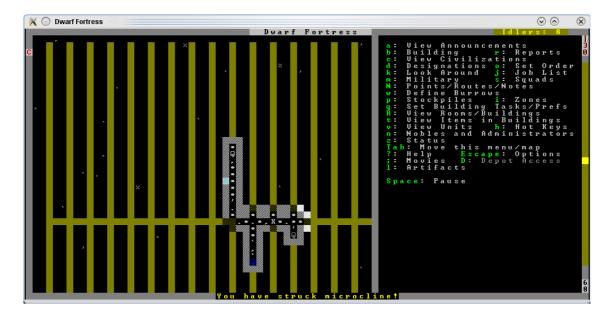
I have ordered the upper farm to be flooded. No accidents occured, everything went quite fine. Two shrubs grew almost immediately after the water touched the sandy floor.

19th Slate, 505

The miners are, once again, in lack of a job, so I have begun a new mining operation in the deeps, a few levels above the top cavern level.



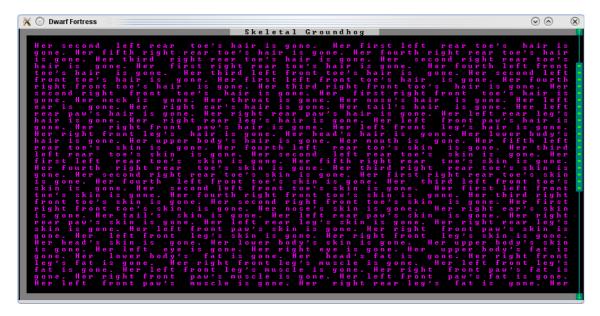
20th Slate, 505 Raw microcline! Praise the miners!



A few hours later, the miners informed me that they've also found a native silver vein, but I didn't pay much attention.

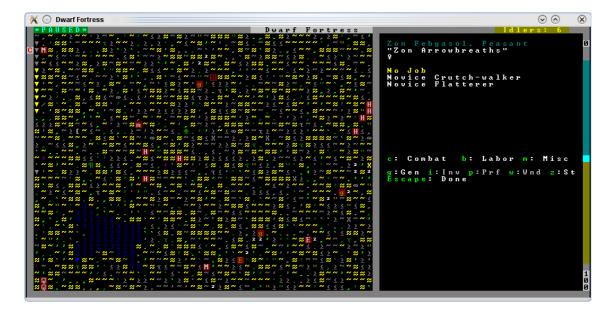
21st Slate, 505

A pair of evil, evil groundhogs, one zombified and the other nothing but bone, have appeared. How can anything so small be so terrifying?



28th Slate, 505

Migrants! Migrants have arrived! Among others, there was a high master furnace operator (truly, a gift from the gods in any situation) and, well... one dwarf of lesser talents, let's leave it at that...



All in all, twenty dwarves have come to the fortress this time.

As if inspired by the arrival of new inhabitants, one of the masons has withdrawn from society, having been taken by a rather strange mood.

13th Felsite, 505

I have constructed a jeweler's workshop and the moody dwarf immediately claimed it. Instead of spending hours on an end searching for the perfect materials needed for his work, he picked up the first valuable stone around and set to work...

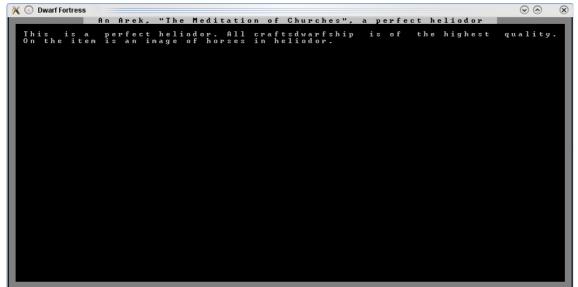


17th Felsite, 505

An elven caravan has come. Only now do I notice that we do not, in fact, possess a trade depot. I have ordered the construction of one. It's in a rather unsafe location, open to enemy fire and the wrath of the elements, but access to it can be blocked by raising the bridge, which will have to suffice for now.

The mason has finished making his, um, *artifact* and in so doing, became a legendary gem setter. The artifact? A *perfect heliodor*:

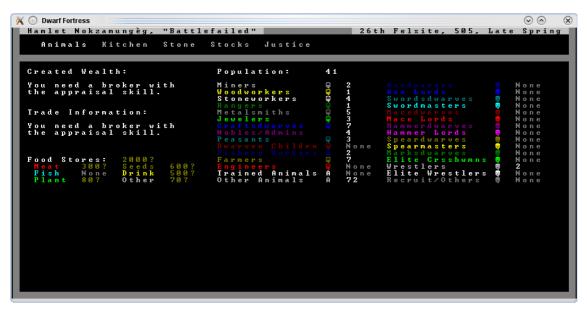


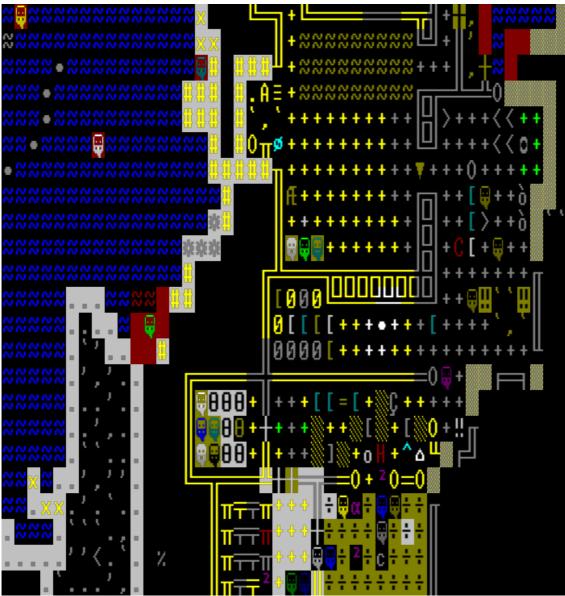


Better than nothing, I guess.

26th Felsite, 505

The trade depot was finished a few days ago and I have traded with the elves, mainly for drinks. The absence of a broker was strongly felt as I am now really not at all sure just how much profit did I give the elves. They seemed extremely content with what they got out of the trade.





TURN 7 – SETH CREIYD

Dwarf against earth

The Journal of Creiyd Edusil 8th Hematite, 505, Early Summer

This is a leather bound parchment journal. Inside the journal are scrawlings in charcoal. The journal relates to the experiences of overseer Creiyd Clearlanterns at Battlefailed in 505.

Engraving is adversarial business. It is dwarf against earth in a battle with one inevitable outcome: the destruction of the rock, the subjugation of its form. Forever you will scar its face with the likeness you deem fit for it to have, be it any thing of beauty or otherwise.

At University back at the Mountainhome, old Baucrates the Wise would argue this point when I brought it up in my thesis. He said there is nothing adversarial about it; rock had no will to resist with, and neither did I, once I left the area, and anyone could come forth thereafter and smooth over my work, rendering my expression of will as empty as it had been before my time there.

Now then, whether or not the rock has a will, or was shaped by a will, is impossible to determine logically. But let us assume, for the sake of argument, that it has. Then, if I were not entitled to my craft, would the earth itself not swallow me whole? True, will has its time when it must be focused elsewhere, on to tasks better suited to its purpose. This usurper should have as much right to defy my will as I had to defile the rock. And perhaps the stone, in its tolerance, in its passive acceptance, has given permission.



I came to this dismal fishing fort in order to learn to survive. It was my hope that living among the undead would raise my appreciation for life. One could say that it has. I have learned to wallow in it. Being here has taught me the world is a mass of chaos, a gibbering canvas meaningless until it has

been tamed and taught form. If it does have a will of its own, 'tis a mindless will, that cares not what happens to it or anyone that meets it, for it cannot meet anyone.

The other reason I came here was to practice my philosophy in some secret far off place, hidden from the prying eyes of the Queen. Obviously, since she banned the Guild of Philosophers we have been forced to live in something of a shadow. There's just no work in the business, anymore.

It can't be denied that life here is interesting. My predecessors have fully documented the history of this place, which will be useful for my present task. About an hour ago, Oglokoog the Overseer stepped down from his position and nominated me as his successor. I do not understand why. We do not know each other well. I suspect my education credentials alone have qualified me. Still, I cannot fight such a bountiful turn of fate. I happily accepted.

```
expedition leader nilitia commander 'Krimson II' Thosbutcatten, mi[REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE] 'Samrist' Storlutcatten, sheri[REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE] 'Creiyd' Esudil, Overseer [REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE] 'Oglokoog' Desisustuth, Whatev[REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE] 'Melkorp' Limulamud, broker [REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE] 'Atreku' Zafalnish, arsenal dw[REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE] 'Atreku' Zafalnish, arsenal dw[REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE] So
```

here I am, the new overseer, reading the relevent paperwork. It seems that when ordering this outpost built, the Queen requested 'a Dwarven Paradise.' Seems more like a tongue-in-cheek way of sentencing a few undesirables to death. I've always found the authority of royalty to be... invigorating.

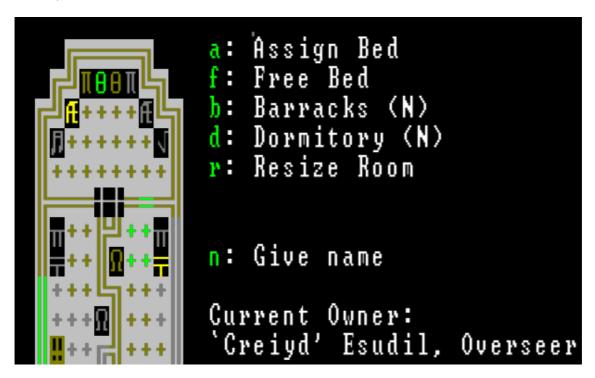
Paradise, she said. I will entertain lurid thoughts of the Queen tonight, a treason far more wholesome in these pages than my mind.

Great Lur, this most humble servant thanks thee for this opportunity. I shall erect before thee a great temple, that I may be worth a nibble of the fruit of thy tempting grace.

```
Lur Gakitdamîd, "Lur Thiefwitch"

Lur Thiefwitch is a deity of The Sword of Boots. Lur most often takes the form of a dwarf and is associated with jealousy.
```

I have taken control of the Overseer's quarters from Samrist. It's quite comfortable. This position has its perks.



The leader of the Mason's Guild, Cog Racksects, a dwarf I've only recently formally met, is the most beautiful person I have ever laid eyes on.

She is very weak. Her hair is clean-shaven. She has a high, clear voice. Her teeth are tangled. Her somewhat broad nose is extrenely short. Her somewhat splayed out ears are somewhat tall. She has high cheekbones, and she has a narrow, prominent chin. Her lips are thin. Her ecru skin is slightly wrinkled. Her eyes are aguanarine.

She speaks with the eloquence of elves, but with the fire of a dwarf. The sight of her fills me with a coldness that threatens to paralyze my spine and throw shivers down my limbs. Her intellect is keener than the sharpest blade, and when her eyes take hold of mine, it is as though every secret I have is laid bare to her, and with it there is an understanding of power, as if with a glance it is known I am hers.

```
'Krimson' Zatamlogem, Swordsdwarf
Enshal Kodorzalud
'Samzul' Azinkûbuk, Distracted Carpenter
Bim Zoluthfikod, Elite Wrestler
Stukos Bibankel, Miner
Cerol Shamebrith, Dwarven Child
Kadôl Thothiden, Elite Wrestler
Udib Lolorabod, Farmer
Ral Athelurus, Farmer's Guild
Athel Astnônub, Mason's Guild
Kogsak Sazirvucar, Farmer's Guild
'Andreus II' Shembidok, Miner's Guild
'Urist The Blue' Idenbâsen, Miner's Guild
'Mathlc' Sefolathel, Blacksmith
'Oglokoog' Desisustuth, Whateverer
'Creiyd' Esudil, Overseer
'Friend
'Creiyd' Esudil, Overseer
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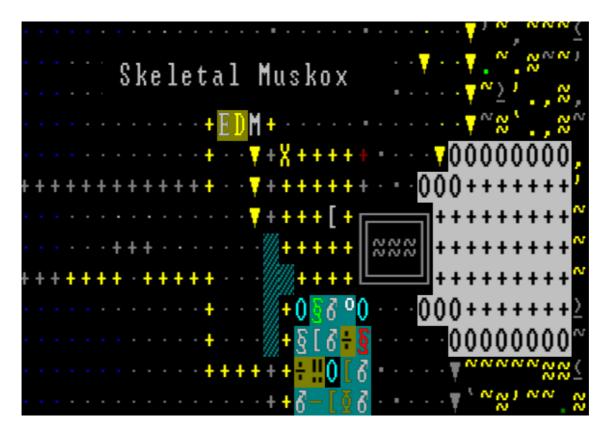
Of course, she is the lover of Militia Commander Krimson. I cannot hate the dwarf, no matter how I'd like to. He's a noble enough sort. I might admit his death would be a boon if not for the sadness it would bring to bear, but to him I'll bear no ill will. For now, all I can do is watch from a distance and wait for my time.

It is fortunate I write this journal in code. It would be less fortunate if others could read it.

In other news, **we have no doctor.** Not a suturer nor a bone setter nor even a bloody nurse. Oglokoog has been declared Chief Medical Dwarf, but he doesn't know medicine any better than the rest of us, he just happens to be the dwarf willing to stain his hands in the attempt. Let us hope practice perfects.

```
Kikrost Godenkurel, Metalsmith cancels Store Item in Stockpile:
Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.
Erib Melbilåkum, Woodcrafter cancels Store Item in Stockpile: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.
Unib Ottanlimul, Fish Cleaner cancels Eat: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.
Erib Melbilåkum, Woodcrafter cancels Drink: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.
```

This morning there came excited shouts from the beach -- skeletal muskoxen were sighted near the front gates. They attacked the elves that were lingering about our trade depot. The elves and their animals were quickly and noisily maimed by one of the skoxen that passed through the entrance platform. This is just how I hoped my first day on the job would turn out.



While the wounded lay moaning outside, Commander Krimson assembled the Battlefailed militia. "The Good Rocks," they call themselves. So adorable. Ten brazen dwarves prepared to hurl themselves at a terrifying enemy without even a weapon to shake. I would admire their courage if I didn't marvel at their stupidity.

SQUADS/LEADERS	SQUAD POSITIONS
The Good Rocks militia captain militia captain	1. 'Krmsn I' Thsbtcttn, mlt 2. Rakust Nokzamfeb, Wrstlr 3. Tulon "teblesast, Wrstlr 4. Kikrst Gdnkrl, Irn Ungrd 5. Obok Bomrkbâsn, Lthrwrkr 6. Tobul Edëmastel, Guardin 7. Tosid ádolnil, Swrdsdwrf 8. Sigun èzumled, Macedwarf 9. Lokum Zulbanlåth, Wrstlr 10. Medtob ònulabsm, Wrstlr

Skeletons are strange creatures. Despite their lack of muscles, they are unspeakably strong. As an example of this, Tolbul the swordsdwarf was thrown over the side of a wall by the skox. Three more dwarves piled on top of the creature, trying to wrestle it to the ground and immobilize it. After sighting the struggle, the rest of the fort descended into free panic.

```
The dwarves suspended the construction of gypsum Coffer.

Moldath Idensolon, Thresher cancels Store Item in Stockpile: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.

'Krinson II' Thosbutcatten has become a militia commander.

Erib Melbilåkum, Woodcrafter cancels Construct Building: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.

The dwarves suspended the construction of Bed.

Unib Ottanlimul, Fish Cleaner cancels Store Item in Stockpile:
Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.

Moldath Idensolon, Thresher cancels Destroy Building: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.

Erib Melbilåkum, Woodcrafter cancels Store Item in Stockpile: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.

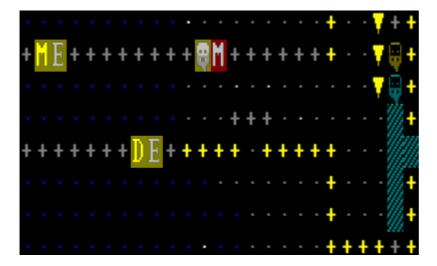
'Melkorp' Limulanud, broker cancels Store Item in Stockpile: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.

'Turkey XIII' Tashemmistêm, Trapper cancels Store Item in Stockpile: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.
```

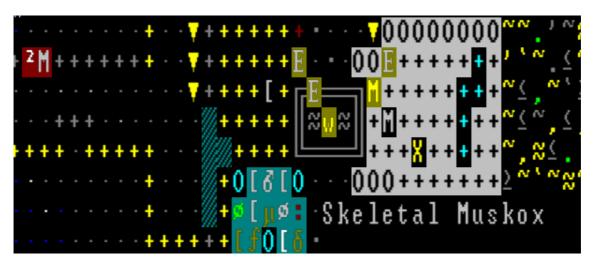
Someone kept shouting, "The skeleton is bleeding! The skeleton is bleeding!"



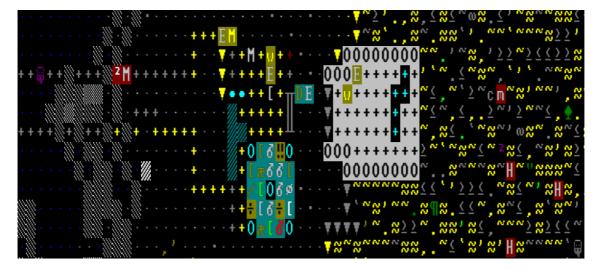
Kikrost and Krimson have suffered severe injuries to their legs before the beast suddenly stopped struggling, its sinister energies spent. Its rear right hoof lay scant inches from its face when it finally gave in.



We recovered our wounded, but before long, more skoxen appeared.



I ordered the drawbridge raised and the doors sealed. I remember thinking those stupid elves could fend for themselves, and hoped they'd distract the monster long enough to cut ourselves off.



Alas, the bridge was pulled too late, and a skox was locked inside as it raised. An elf and his donkey who had been standing on the bridge before it lifted were thrown into the air to land on the ground

with an outspoken crunch. Trapped along with the skox were some wounded elves and their pockmarked animals.

A couple unfortunate dwarves are stuck outside with the rest of the skoxen. May Lur have pity on them and grant them quick release.

Concerned, I persuaded a nearby dwarf to make a noble sacrifice for the good of the fort.

```
Catten Inlolok, "Catten Evergranite", nilitia captain

Catten Inlolok has been happy lately. He has complained about the draft lately. He dined in a legendary dining room recently. He admired a fine Bed lately. He gave somebody food lately. He admired a fine tastefully arranged Burial Receptacle lately. He was conforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. He has been satisfied at work lately.

He is a worshipper of Lur Thiefwitch.

He is a citizen of The Sword of Boots. He is a member of The Oar of Ankles. He is the nilitia captain of The Oar of Ankles.

He is fifty-five years old, born on the 18th of Moonstone in the year 449.

He is short and incredibly skinny. His hair is curly. His very short sideburns are neatly combed. His very long moustache is neatly combed. His very long beard is braided. His very long hair is neatly combed. His lips are very thick. He has very low cheekbones, and he has a jutting chin. His thin-irised heliotrope eyes are very wide-set. He has a low, clear voice. His eyebrows are quite dense. His nose bridge is convex. His teeth are gapped. His hair is copper. His skin is tan.

He is alnost never sick and incredibly quick to heal, but he is quick to tire.

Catten Inlolok likes bisnuthinite, rose gold, bloodstone, rope reed fiber fabric, the color dark chestnut, bracelets, flasks, donkeys for their stubborness and bronze colossuses for their height. When possible, he prefers to consume dwarven ale.

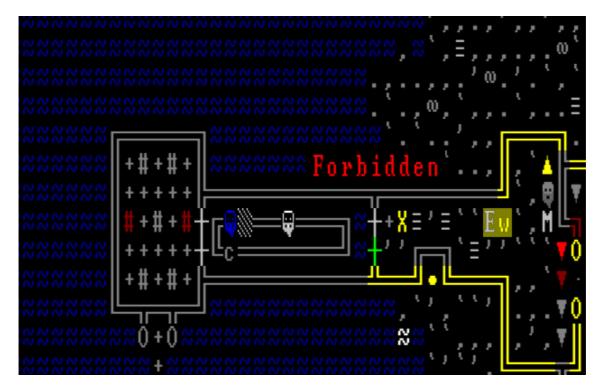
He has a natural inclination toward language, an ability to read enotions fairly well, willpower and the ability to focus.

He is trusting. He needs alcohol to get through the working day.
```

Catten was just a lowly soap maker in life, a peasant of no consequence or significance whatsoever. Ambitionless, he would have drifted through life without purpose before dying of old age, alone and forgotten. Today, on what might have been be the last day of his life, that fate would be forever

altered.

Samrist and Ilmoren locked themselves inside the fishing platform away from the rampaging skox, while Catten makes a hopeless stand against it, buying time until the rest of the militia arrives.



As I write, he is slowly dying, blissfully unconscious after the pain in his shattered leg caused him to pass out. His throat has been gored, and he appears to be struggling for breath as blood pools in the wound. The astute may be wondering how I know this.



I'm watching from above, of course. That is my job, after all.

It occurred to me that my well being was at stake, so I started to shout as loud as I could for assistance. Before long, the militia came running up the stairs.



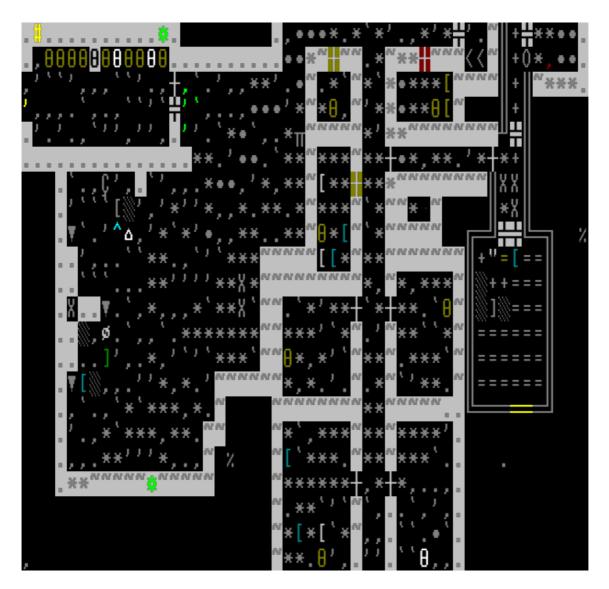
Now that they have their axes, our militia isn't so powerless. The ox was quickly sundered, collapsing voicelessly into a pile of loosely connected and harmless bones. With the threat eliminated. order is restored. The next day, the event is almost completely forgotten. It seems we are getting used to the skanimals, and our fear of them is lessening.

I told Cog of my feelings for her, to no avail. Our relationship remains maddeningly as friends. Very well. I will subjugate my lust for the greater honor of being close to her. Such abasement shames me, but I seek the greater glory of Lur, and shall be rewarded for these trials. Rather than mope in my quarters, I've set about improving this wretched little hovel we call home. Take this underground farm that is completely unused. It should be removed to make room for something th



Over the next few weeks the militia slew a few more skoxen, and with only two spare axes it has mostly still been the work of only bare hands and stoutness, with our forces sustaining only minor injuries. The harsh nature of this land seems to be weeding out all weakness in these dwarves. On a related note, Catten survived his injuries, and is resting in bed. He's now a local hero. I don't expect he will thank me.

The guard has been stationed outside while construction ensues on the new entrance. Labor production is up. With the construction of the new bedrooms, there are plenty of sleeping spaces to go around.

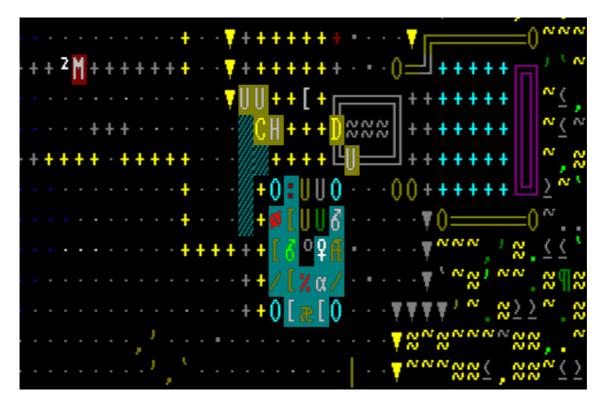


Samrist, the sheriff and ex-overseer, was refusing to work. Several tasks had been offered to him, none of which appeared to satisfy his lofty criteria. Finally, after being confronted, he agreed to something.

'Samrist' Storlutcatten, sheriff Fish

Whatever. I don't care what he does, as long as it isn't nothing. There is too much to be done around here for there to be any laziness. I have spread this motivational outlook to our more idle workers, making them part of something they can be proud of: our new entrance hall. It was completed just in time for the human caravan to arrive.

Typically, once the last human merchant passed through our gates, a horde of skeletal horses was spotted galloping over the horizon. The caravan guards made liberal use of their impotent crossbows from the depot. One of them was counting out loud for every shot he made: "One, two, three!" I think he is an idiot.



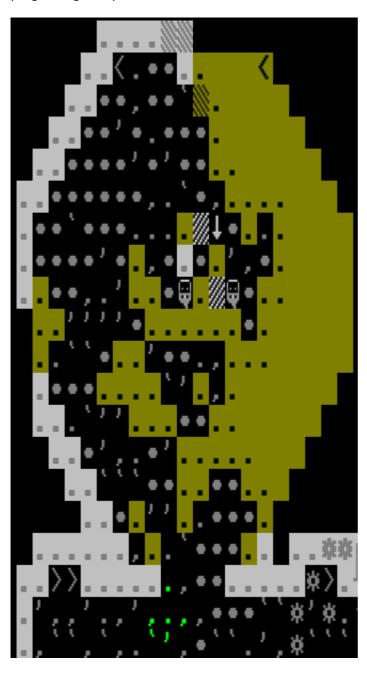
To the traders, we passed off a few worthless trinkets for metal, booze, wood, and food. I don't understand how these humans are so naive. Later that day, Samrist ran through the halls screaming about a brilliant idea and stopped at a Craftsdwarf's workshop. Whatever he'd thought of, he worked on it quickly. He was finished in a half-hour.



'Samrist' Storlutcatten, sheriff has created Nakuth Tomus, a jet mug! Nakuth Tomus, "The Braid of Shoving", a jet mug! This is a jet mug. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. On the item is an image of iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto the savanna titan in jet. iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the savanna titan iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto in The Plains of Ooze in a time before time.

Well, it's a nice mug. I don't see the point of it, but if it brings more immigrants to this dross heap, I say we make a dozen. We need some new she-dwarves around here.

In other news, Andreus has replaced HeyGuys as bookkeeeper, while the latter recuperates from injuries sustained from something I can't remember. Also, construction on Lur's Temple is progressing nicely.



We're using our abundance of coke and ore to forge new weapons and armor for our soldiers, and new picks for the miners. It seems the best use for the metal at this point.

There are too many Lur-damned animals in this fort. I awoke this morning to find dung outside my bedroom door. It has to end.

I've decided to assist in their removal.



Earlier this foggy afternoon, another herd of skhorses was seen charging the fort from across the sand. The gates were promptly ordered shut.

Poor Id, a farmer of some sort, was trapped outside with the horses and was trampled to death. Pity, as she was a pretty lass. She was the spouse of our broker; I expect Melkorp will be unhappy to learn of his wife's demise.

'Melkorp' Limulamud, "'Melkorp' Goldthunder", broker 'Melkorp' Limulamud has been ecstatic lately. He has lost a spouse to tragedy recently. He slept without a proper room recently. He dined in a legendary dining room recently. He had a truly decadent drink lately. He has been tired lately. He admired a fine Trade Depot lately. He talked with the spouse lately. He admired a fine tastefully arranged Statue lately. He has been satisfied at work lately. He gave somebody water lately. He has complained of hunger lately. He is narried to Id Oiledfound. He is a worshipper of Lur Ihiefwitch. He is a citizen of The Sword of Boots. He is a member of The Oar of Ankles. He is the broker of The Oar of Ankles. He is seventy-two years old, born on the 7th of Felsite in the year 433. His medium-length sideburns are braided. His very long moustache is arranged in double braids. His very long beard is arranged in double braids. His medium-length hair is neatly combed. He is average in size. He has very low cheekbones, and he has a square chin. His narrow thin-irised cobalt eyes are deeply sunken. His eyebrows are incredibly high. His nose is sharply hooked. His teeth are tangled. His great-lobed broad ears are very splayed out. His nose bridge is convex. He has a low voice. His ears are somewhat short. His head is somewhat narrow. His hair is golden yellow. His skin is peach.

What else? I think Cog and Krimson are planning to marry. No migrants so far this year. To hell with them. A milker died of thirst. I don't remember his name. This damned fortress can drown anon in an ocean of piss for all I'd care that I'd not see the morrow.

The forgotten beast Riqui Omothafa has come! A great hairy dimetrodon. It has large mandibles and it is ravening. Its amber hair is short and even. Beware its deadly dust!

Press Enter to close window



Autumn arrived, along with our outpost liaison the same day. He was a human, and a very odd human he was. In retrospect, all the foreigners that come here have acted a bit strangely, but Rigoth stood out in particular. I refer to him in the past tense because his peculiar actions led him to a rather noteworthy end.

He reached the front of our gates, but instead of walking into the fortress as any rational being might, he took off in chase of some elk (of a non-skeletal sort, for a change). Why he did this, no one is certain. He bounded off to the south in pursuit, laughing, leaving us scratching our beards in bewilderment, wondering if this accursed beach holds a bane to the senses only dwarves are immune to.

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SCE - (CSC - SSS - SCS - SSS -
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Rigoth chased the elk directly into a group of kobolds armed with copper swords which had been hiding half-buried in the sand. They popped out of the ground on every side of him.

It was over quickly. Once he had stopped moving, the kobolds charged the front gates, spattered in the blood of our former liaison. The Good Rocks were there to meet them. In a flash of iron, three of the vermin were dead. Confronted by superior forces, the kobolds fled quickly, but not before they left their mark.

```
Tulon ïteblesast, Wrestler "Tulon Postflank"
Obok Bomrekbâsen, Wrestler
                                                                   Kikrost Godenkurel,
"Obok Whipspray"
                                                                   "Kikrost Ropelion"
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lower body
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Obok lost his entire left arm, and Kikrost is missing most of her right. Still, they are alive, they will grow stronger, their sacrifice having served its purpose. Battlefailed is safe.



In fact, Kikrost is one of the most impressive dwarves I have ever seen. She refused assistance, and walked herself off the battlefield, clutching her own gory stump hard enough to stem the bleeding. And the entire while, she never dropped her shield. The rest of the soldiers have started calling her "The Iron Vanguard."

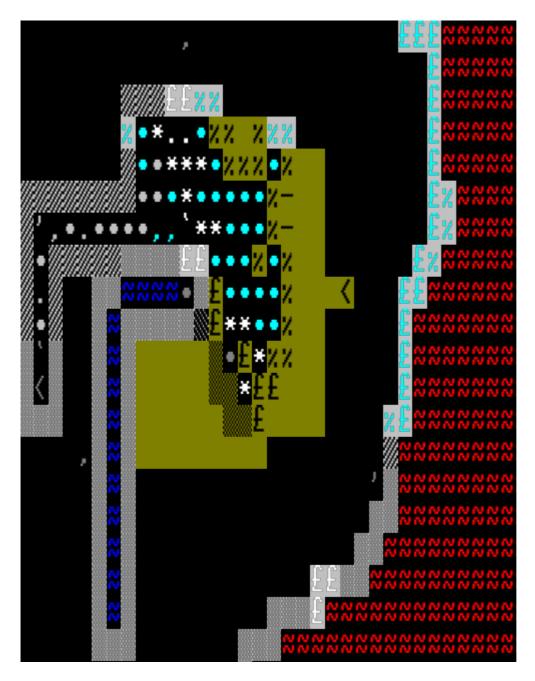
Not only that, The Vanguard has avoided medical attention completely. Astonishing our doctor, she refused to be taken off duty. I assume she's suffered some trauma from her ordeal. I do not believe in such bravery of its own sake, but as long as she remains useful, I won't complain about it.

'Oglokoog' Desisustuth, Whateverer cancels Surgery: Patient not resting.

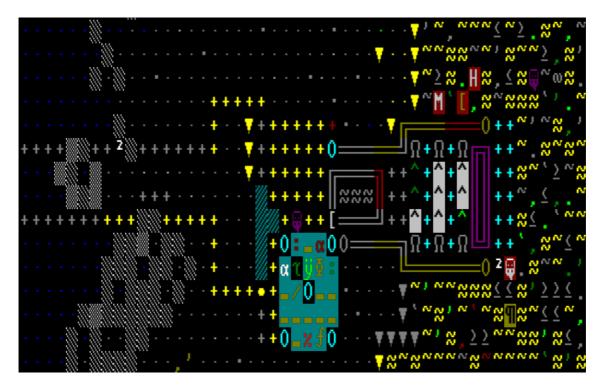
Tragedy struck during an attempt to access the subterranean magma. Urist the Blue was drowned in a flash flood when one of of the walls surrounding the river was breached. Fortunately, the flood poses no threat to the fortress, but I doubt we'll ever recover Urist's corpse.



A new route has been planned to the future site of our magma forges.



Before Winter sets in, a few statues have been tastefully arranged by the main entrance, and traps are being rigged between them. The more protection we have from the undead animals outside, the better.



As Autumn draws to a close, I find myself in an unfamiliar state. I am unable to wrench away from Cog's hold over me. She has possessed my intention without an attempt. This has never happened to me before. I have confided in Andreus my troubles. He suggested it is love that I feel. What a ridiculous notion. What I feel is a hopeless infatuation complicated by my obsessive single-mindedness. I simply can't help it.



Winters, for me, have followed a discernible pattern. Every one of them has been unbearably boring aside from a few dramatic events that spring up here and there. This Winter began with some excitement.

```
The hill titan Sidaya Ocitape Mafiaditha has come! A huge three-eyed dimetrodon. It has a curling trunk and it has a regal bearing. Its slate gray scales are jagged and set far apart. Beware its poisonous bite!
```

Never before have I seen such a strange and enormous being. The alarm was speedily raised, and The Good Rocks sallied forth. The Iron Vanguard led the assault, carrying a shield in her only hand.

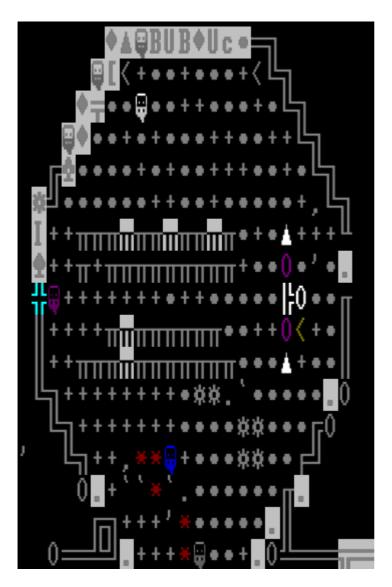
The dwarves fell upon the titan with their characteristic shriek of a battle cry. The beast was rent asunder by dozens of savage blows, fiercely paced and truly aimed. We will eat well for a very long time.

```
'Atreku' Zafalnish, arsenal dwarf has given birth to a girl.
'Atreku' Zafalnish, arsenal dwarf cancels Construct rock Throne: Seeking Infant.
Construct rock Throne (30) has been completed.
Spring has arrived!
The Stray Horse (Tame) has died of old age.
```

On the last day of Winter, Atreku, the Arsenal Dwarf, gave birth to a girl. On the first day of spring, an old work horse died of old age. A fitting reminder that life and death are not water and oil to each other.

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And since Spring has arrived, I must turn over the fortress to the next overseer. I am happy to relinquish the mantle of leadership. I have tasted the position of official authority and honestly, its restrictions are a bit much for me to deal with. I look forward to some free time, and the change to focus on the final touches of Lur's Temple. It has been too long since I touched chisel to raw stone, and I need to return to my art.



Besides, I have learned from Cog that in order to rule, one need not rule. One need only rule the ruler.

```
Cog Ledevost has been unhappy lately. She was forced to endure the decay of a friend. She dined in a legendary dining roon recently. She adnired a fine Door lately. She has complained of thirst lately. She has lost a friend to tragedy recently. She slept without a proper roon recently. She has been tired lately. She ate a fine dish lately. She has complained of hunger lately. She was disgusted by a miasma lately. She was nauseated by the sun lately. She was caught in the rain recently. She has been satisfied at work lately. She was conforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. She is a casual worshipper of Enshal Dawnfuture. She is a citizen of The Sword of Roots. She is a nember of The Oar of Rokles.

She is eighty-three years old, born on the 25th of Timber in the year 422.

She is very weak. Her hair is clean-shaven. She has a high, clear voice. Her teeth are tangled. Her sonewhat broad nose is extremely short. Her sonewhat splayed out ears are sonewhat tall. She has high cheekbones, and she has a narrow, proninent chin. Her lips are thin. Her ecru skin is slightly wrinkled. Her eyes are aquamarine.

She is quick to heal and rarely sick, but she is unquestionably weak.

Cog Ledevost likes linestone, native platinum, fire agate, the color aquamarine, bolts, shields, goblets, horses for their strength and shads for their silvery bodies. When possible, she prefers to consume she and dwarven ale. She absolutely detests rats.

She has an anazing spatial sense and a sum of patience, but she has a meager kinesthetic sense, a little difficulty with words, a meager ability with social relationships, poor enpathy and really poor focus.

She is quick to anger. She is confortable in social situations. She can handle stress. She is rarely happy or enthusiastic. She does not have a great aesthetic sensitivity. She is naturally trustful of everybody. She doesn't like to compromise with others. She strives for excellence. She needs alcohol to get through the working day.
```

I fear I've ruined my relationship with Cog forever. She took the death of Urist pretty hard, and at a party two nights ago, I curtailed the responsibilities of friendship. Rather than support her in her time of need, I took advantage of the moment to throw my jealousies upon her. She has not spoken

to me since, aside from the few words exchanged as a course of business. I can expect no more. She needn't speak again for me to know her disappointment. I would find I'm not even a thought in her mind.

Beneath the night and moonlight she bowed down in prayer to her god of spring. Her visage, as ever intent and fair, cast abeyance over the churning sky, and seeing me, she whispered a sigh. Hidden was the dissonance striking out the presence of a soul aflame holding terse his word, full in truth and self service deferred. As the night ran longer, the sky more blue, the hollow disharmony only grew. Indiscretion falling before the dead, her vision damp, her secrets fled. My heart impelled to be released from unsung battles never ceased. Driven by whim I sought her eyes. This was when the daylight died.

So it was. The night had come at last, the promise of the new dawn swaying in her mind. There she stood, atop the wall along the beach, weeping a tune of lament. I looked at her, she looked away. The hurt stood in its wake, and I knew it was the world. The night ran empty, spilling its fabrication to the sand. Now as the morning rises, the darkness fades before brightened birdsong, but only the moon is awake in the sky, silently crying out the injustice of this ending.

Perhaps she is right. Perhaps I have no true friends. Perhaps I have viewed everyone around me as a pawn in an unwinnable game, like agents of some purpose I alone have the eyes to see. If it were true, I'd feel no surprise. I'd feel nothing at all, beyond a bitter void that is growing all too familiar. My only hope is that a delayed apology can salvage what may be the only meaningful connection I had left to destroy. If greater gods than Lur be there, I pray said god would heed my prayer and help me fill this chasm I've let myself create.

I will not further stain these pages with such pining ink.

TURN 8 - ZATHEL

Utter chaos

Zathel's Report

Seasonal Development Progress Report, year 506, form BRT-325, in accordance to 3rd Directive of Bureau of Colonization

Fortress name: Battlefailed Fortress status: Outpost

Bookmaster: Unib "Zathel" Ottanlimul

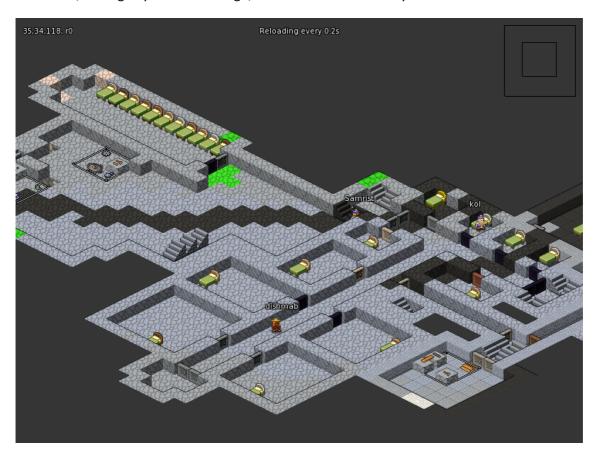
Due to illness I was suffering from for the past year, I was unable to establish proper Bookkeeping practices in the outpost of Battlefailed. For that reason, preparation of proper reports in accordance

to established law concerning colonization efforts can only be begun now.

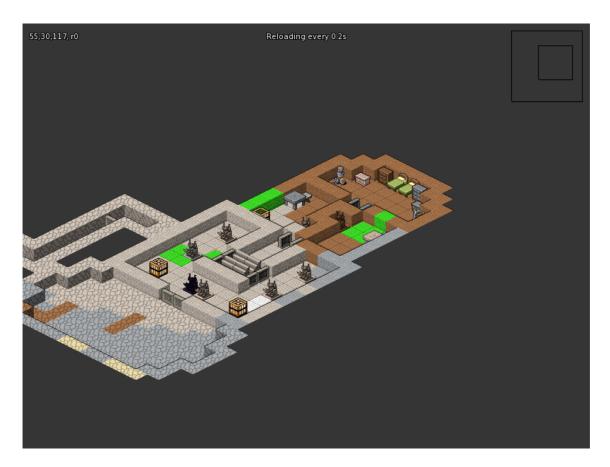
After recovering, I have immediately taken over the governance of the outpost after previous "Overseer" stepped down, in my opinion, due to melancholic mood caused by some tragic romantic entanglement. Most undwarfy. What I saw when finally free of delirious fever I have been afflicted with terrified me.

Battlefailed is a bundle of total and utter chaos. While piles of corpses littering the surrounding oceanside are understandable, considering the location of the outpost, what truly struck my dwarven soul is the sorry, for the lack of proper word describing the entropy reining here, state of the interior. The layout, or rather, complete lack of it, prevents any and all attempts to carry out any proper crafting or construction work. There are stockpiles EVERYWHERE. Refuse stockpiles, food stockpiles, goods stockpiles scattered all over the way too many floors of the outpost. Someone even piled dozens of units of furniture in a space left after mining out a hematite vein. A furniture stockpile in a hematite vein. A VEIN. Zombie muskoxen on the pier leading to fishing platform. Sorry excuse of militia running around with human-made weapons, dressed in tattered rags.

Another horrifying point is the absence of organized living space. There are few mined out bedrooms, lacking any coherent design, and communal dormitory.



This outpost has been established Five years ago. I expected something more than atrocious living conditions. However, previous rulers abused their position to establish opulent quarters for themselves.



I have immediately evicted the previous owner, wallowing in self-pity, seized the rooms and opened the statue garden to public.

Also, time has been wasted on carving out completely unnecessary... temple of some sort, because it can't be anything else. Waste of dwarfhours, if you ask me, even if it is supposedly dedicated to Lur.



I have deemed the current carved out spaced completely unfit for further usage. I have proceeded to plan a proper fortress deeper in the earth, around the third layer of underground caverns and the magma sea situated underneath it.

After hard, but deeply satisfying work I laid out plans for new, better Battlefailed - efficient, two-layered (with expansion prospect) workshop floor/warehouse, based on patented design by Urist Doledod and connected with farm-space that will be irrigated from cavern lake, following instructions in "Irrigation and I" by Olmul Kathilul, standardized living pods, variant 3c, proper hospital and water reservoir, connected to irrigation system pump stack for efficiency. And a practical dining hall. No silliness.

Not long after I sent out designs for mining, an artifact was completed by a member of militia.

```
Catten Imlolok® militia captain has created Kobel
L@rit® a saguaro rib bracelet!
Press Enter to close window
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End of Granite brought up another sign of wastefulness and incompetence of previous designated administrator - he ordered mass slaughter of animals without providing proper storage space for meat and fat. Butchers shops were flooded with miasma. I designated emergency stockpile in nearby corridor... the place is beyond hope anyway.

A group of 20 migrants arrived in the third week of Slate. Sadly, I must conclude that they will be mostly a burden, as current outpost profile predicts gainful employment of only a small number of

them. Apart from the brewer, cook, glassmaker and two crafters, they are all pretty useless in current situation... especially the two hunters. I don't know what made them think that traveling to undead-infested plains was a good idea. This migration brings about one other problem - Battlefailed exceeded population levels of an outpost, and in accordance to proper regulations concerning municipal management of communities, elections will have to be held soon.

Elven caravan braved the cursed Blueness of Malodors to trade with our community, arriving in the third week of Felsite. It gave me the opportunity to replace the previous broker with someone more competent... even I know more about appraisal, and I only took a summer course loosely connected to the topic during my studies at Mountainhomes. I ordered purchase of as much wood, barrels, and alcohol as was possible with our pitiful stocks of trade goods. I need to order some more stone goods before the next caravan.

Remaining weeks of spring were uneventful. There was no trouble with undead denizens of the plains, and the work on fortress proper is progressing smoothly. I anticipate finishing the necessary mining by the end of autumn.

Hematite was pretty uneventful. Work on the fort proper is progressing smoothly. Citizens of Battlefailed elected Ral Athelurus mayor in elections that miraculously did not breach any regulations. I have better things to worry about than assigning him quarters befitting his rank... and if it was my choice, I'd just chuck him a standard living pod room, but it's "tradition" for the mayor to have opulent quarters. Also, Ilmoran got a fey mood. I wonder what he'll make? A statue inscribed with images of merchants getting stomped into ground by undead wildlife? At least I could make some use of that, unlike the previous creation of "inspired" dwarven mind.

In Malachite, the new Mayor, in total inconsideration for the atrocious state of the fortress, ordered construction of items from bronze. But, an order is an order, and I immediately sent out necessary forms.

As for the artifact created by Ilmoran, I wasn't far off in my predictions.

```
Ilmoran *mtulon Hason has created Othlestaval a magnetite armor stand!

Press Enter to close window
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Ideal item for new barracks, if and when I will get around to designing them.

After fulfilling the request for bronze items for mayor, he **immediately** ordered even **more** bronze items, and now I have no excuse not to fulfill his request. If bronze is so important to Battlefailed, why not prohibit the export of bronze items?

Miners have been complaining about the location of future magma steelworks. Of course the stone is damp, you are mining directly beneath the lake, what did they expect, scorching sand? I have made sure that mining layout is compliant with Occupational Health and Safety regulations, they should have more faith.

Human caravan arrived in third third week of Galena. I exchanged some of our trade goods (of rather high quality, even if made from subpar material) for metal, wood and alcohol. I have also decided to finally get rid of two zombie muskoxen on the pier leading to fishing platform... some incompetent hauler tripped and dropped a bin of goods in sight of oxen and was too scared to go and retrieve it, despite the fact that there was no danger whatsoever. Not soon later a lone skeletal muskox tried to get into the fortress, but got caught by a cage trap. I have no idea whatsoever what to do with the damned thing.

Overall, summer was peaceful and productive. Apart from that one muskox, there was no trouble from undead, the halls of new fort are nearly complete, food and drink is plentiful (according to my calculations, current stocks of alcohol should last for at least another year and half, even if they were never resupplied). It is my sincere hope that autumn will be the same.

First day of fall welcomed me with a rather annoying news. It turns out that I have made some minor design mistakes while adapting workshop layouts for Battlefailed's needs. It's nothing major, and easily remedied, but it serves as a vital reminder that I need to be more careful. Also, I am now completely certain that the mayor suffers from unhealthy fascination with bronze. I have decided to indulge him, it will keep him from whining about not having proper accommodations. I hope citizens of Battlefailed will make a more... reasonable choice during the next election.

I have employed the entirety of citizenry to haul ores, unrefined fuel and marble to the future magma metalworks. At least they'll have something to do while miners complete their assignment. And it seems they will do so within predicted time constraints. Splendid.

Curses! A goblin ambush, just as a caravan arrived! I thought Battlefailed was free of the greenskin filth! They were quickly dealt with by the caravan guard, but not before the traders sustained injuries. During the attack, one of them went mad, apparently snapping after traversing the cursed plains surrounding our fortress. Thankfully we're well supplied, and even if this caravan leaves before trading with us, Battlefailed will be fine.

I am wondering if it's a coincidence, but one of our carpenters was struck by inspiration and withdrew to his workshops. I wonder what he'll come up with? A bed? A statue? Only time will tell.

There number of thieves and snatchers that try to invade the fortress is starting to worry me. Thankfully, the traps work, and kobolds are quickly dispatched by our militia.

The artifact that the carpenter worked on turned out to be a crutch. Somehow, I am not surprised, given what he had as inspiration.



Apart from the goblins, autumn was pretty uneventful. Fortress proper is mined out and awaiting settlement. When next spring comes, Battlefailed will truly become a true dwarven fortress.

The mining works are complete, and since rubble was regularly hauled away behind the miners, the work can finally begin now.

In other news, mad trader got done in by skeletal horses, who then proceeded to attempt to invade the fort, toppling the statue in the progress. Which revealed a fatal defense flaw... toppled statue gave way to bypassing the first line of traps. I have ordered deconstruction of the statues and building of walls in their place.

For that matter, I have ordered deconstruction of whole temporary living and utility space just below the ground.

Work is slow, but steady. I will have to give up my position as temporary administrator of Battlefailed before I see the full glory of the new fortress, but maybe that's for the better.

The end of my term wasn't peaceful and pleasant. Another goblin ambush came in the last days of Obsidian. My hopes of letting the traps take care of the invaders were crushed when few goblin snatchers got caught in them. Thankfully, the raiders delayed their advance long enough to allow the militia to amass. One brief scuffle later all the greenskins were dead.

Overall, it was a very productive year, but the work is not yet finished. Stockpiles need to be established and moved, new farmspace flooded, dwarves settled in the living pods and magma metalworks built. But that is all the work for the next administrator. I will retread to my new quarters in living pods and busy myself with stockpile records.

End of report

Signed,

Unib "Zathel" Ottanlimul, Bookmaster and temporary administrator of Battlefailed.

TURN 9 – TURKEY XIII

Undead muskox wrestling

The engravings of Turkey XIII

Engraved on the wall is an image of 'Turkey XIII' Pulledportal the dwarf. 'Turkey XIII' Pulledportal is travelling. The artwork relates to the settling of the dwarf 'Turkey XIII' Pulledportal in Lower Battlefailed in the early spring of 507.

It is easy to tell when one has entered the territory claimed by Battlefailed, as the perimeter is marked by the bleached skeletons of uncounted horses, donkeys, muskoxen and the occasional dwarf considered too unimportant to give a proper burial. Beside some such former creatures are teetering piles of wood, cages and bins full of cloth and leather. It seems nearly half the listed inventory of the fort is strewn about outside in this manner, where is it considered too dangerous to be collected and used.

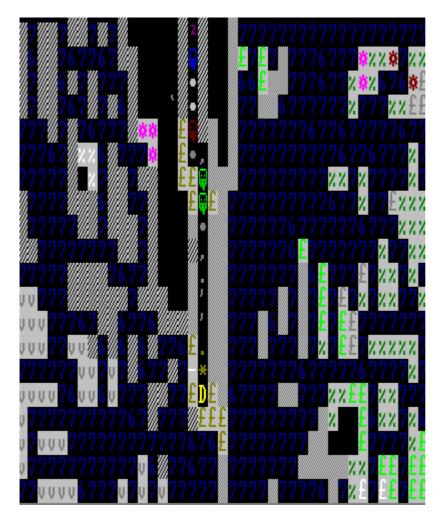
Across the occasional dead shrub or tuft of grass poking out of the sand and ash, the entrance to the fort is marked by lines of goblins and undead horses trapped in cages, which were simply shoved aside to reload the trap and capture yet another skeletal horse. Beyond that is the bright blue trade depot, currently unoccupied but for the tame bats and fluffy wamblers pottering about in cages. The upper part of the fort is mostly abandoned, with only a couple of chairs and a workshop yet to be dismantled. This part of the fort is characterized by little rooms full of bones, and one which contains ten skull arranged in neat little rows. The hospital area here is still functional, which is fortunate for its occupants - it appears the traditional training method of Battlefailed is to wrestle unliving muskoxen.

A passage leads north to a steep spiral ramp which decends no less than eighty-eight levels before opening to a living area of neatly stacked bedrooms and dining. The ramp decends further to a broad but empty stockpile, and then continues to an work area outfitted with both magma and water plumbing

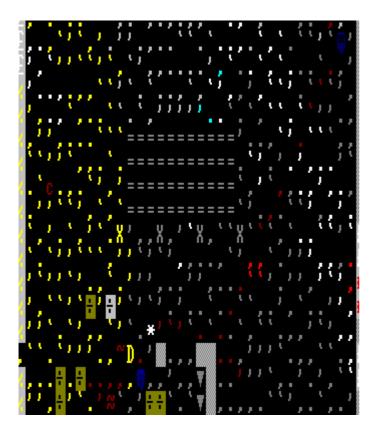
Engraved on the wall is an image of Riqui Roaredsmokes the Forgotten Beast and dwarves. Rigui Roaredsmokes is striking a menacing pose. The dwarves are cowering. The artwork relates to the attack the of the Forgotten Beast Riqui Roaredsmokes in Battlefailed in the early spring of 507.

The grand spiral ramp is quite elegant, but also quite indirect. The dwarves are clever, though, and know a shortcut. Down a near-vertical stairwell and riddled with dugouts and dead ends from forgotten excavation projects, this back route to Lower Battlefailed meets the main ramp near the entrance to an obsolete water channel covered by a floor hatch. The path is narrow, but allows the line of dwarves hauling equipment from the older settlement above to complete their tasks in nearly half the time. A sudden noise disturbs the rocky depths of the stairwell, when a great hairy dimetrodon punches through the hatch, tearing it off its hinges. The beast roars a sound that has not been heard since the time before time at the wide-eyed dwarf who happened to be carrying a barrel past at the time.

→gypsum Floor Hatch destroyed by Riqui Omothafa, Forgotten Beast.

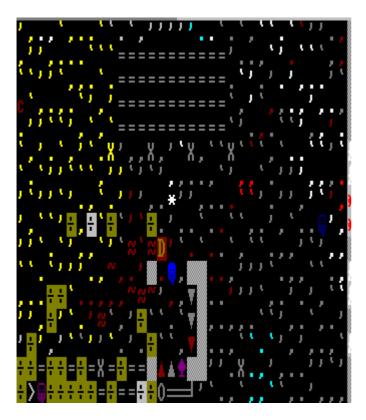


Screams echo down the tunnels as a surge or dwarves run in panic from the monster that emerged in their midst. One hapless fisherdwarf runs too close to the great mandibles of the beast, and a finger is quickly snapped off. Claws tear furiously into flesh before the dwarf leaps out of reach and sprints down a dead-end tunnel, the monster sending blast after blast of icy cold extract towards his retreating form. A small child follows the injured fisherdwarf down the dead end, foolishly assuming the adult knows where he's going. The monster ends its pursuit, preferring instead to slowly tear the girl to pieces. The beast climbs the ramp, occasionally lashing out at passing dwaves who were unaware of the approaching danger. It gets as far as an empty stockpile before realising the injured fisherdwarf - now covered in sores and numb from the freezing breath that enclosed him below - has been cautiously creeping along behind seeking a bed to rest in. The creature chases him around the cavernous room unable to keep up with the speedy dwarf, impatiently blasting clouds of frozen breath at him the whole time.



Engraved on the wall is an image of Rakust Battlearrows the dwarf and Riqui Roaredsmokes the forgotten beast. Riqui Roaredsmokes is making a plaintive guesture. Rakust Battlearrows is laughing. The artwork relates to the fatal wounding of the forgotten beast Riqui Roaredsmokes by the dwarf Rakust Battlearrows in Battlefailed in the early spring of 507.

An axelord arrives from the Upper Battlefailed, having rushed to find a new pair of leggings in the old stockpiles. He hacks into the legs of the beast, one at a time, artfully dancing about in a cloud of icy mist. The monster attempts to follow this dance, but the gushing wounds on its legs slow him down and he collaspes, defeated.



Engraved on the wall is an image of 'Melon' Letterseized the dwarf and dwarves. The dwarves are refusing 'Melon' Letterseized. 'Melon' Letterseized looks dejected. The artwork relates to the removal of the dwarf 'Melon' Letterseized the dwarf from the position of chief medical dwarf of the Oar of Ankles in the early spring of 507.

I had some rearranging to do, as Melon was our best weaponsmith. He was replaced by a dwarf named Goden Flagthrowers who posessed some suturing skill. Oglokoog SnarledFenced was taken off mining for a similar reason, to become an armorer. I also condensed the militia into one squad for simplicity, led by Samrist (I think).

Engraved on the wall is an image of 'Heyguys' Praisedboot the dwarf. 'Heyguys' Praisedboot is in the fetal position. The artwork relates to the dehydration of the dwarf 'Heyguys' Praisedboot in Battlefailed in the mid spring of 507.

The old hospital zone in upper battlefailed is (or was until just now) still functional, but without any furniture. The new Chief Medical Dwarf prefers to cut open our injured with a scalpel than give them water, so we've lost two dwarves to dehydration and are about to lose another. All the haulers are busy moving shit downstairs to take care of anybody, and will probably be doing that for a couple more months at least.

Engraved on the wall is an image of Sodel Whiplens the dwarf and Withercharm the Blind Ring the mica piccolo. Sodel Whiplens is raising Withercharm the Blind Ring. The artwork relates to the creation of the mica piccolo Withercharm the Blind Ring by Sodel Whiplens in Battlefailed in the mid spring of 507.

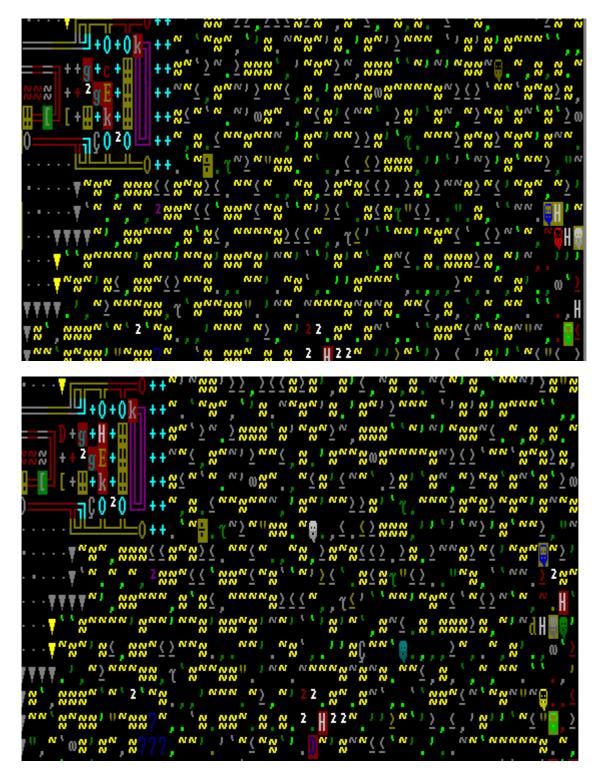
The fisherdwarf who got mauled and breathed on by the forgotten beast became all secretive less than a week later, stormed out of the hospital and began moping around until I built him a craftdwarf's workshop. The artifact is pretty boring, but it still took him over a month to make because he insisted on collecting raw materials from upper battlefailed every time.

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I've been more-or-less ignoring the local fauna but a migrant wave of 22 dwarves popped up right next to a herd of skeletal horses.

A few migrants with combat skills found themselves in the courageous Battlefailed militia all of a sudden, and I scrambled the more skilled warriors from within the fort.



Only 3 migrants got the pulp kicked out of them in the end, and the military stood guard until an extraction team recovered the injured. The new hospital is built but we have no soap, no plaster and the new well isn't active yet.

Engraved on the wall is an image of Kikrost Godenkurel the dwarf and a zombie elk. Kikrost Godenkurel is striking down the zombie elk. The artwork relates to the killing of a zombie elk by the dwarf Kikrost Godenkurel in Battlefailed in the late spring of 507.

When the elf caravan arrived, they hung around at the edge of the map because I'd neglected to build the Depot. I sent the military out again to keep the zombie elks away while an architect hauled three bars of fine pewter 100 levels.

Engraved on the wall is an image of Elano Fificonibo the elf and Aslot Sosbubsospu the goblin. Aslot sosbubsospu is striking down Elano Fificonibo. The artwork relates to the killing of the elf Elanso Fificonibo by the goblin Aslot Sosbubsospu in Battlefailed in the late spring of 507.

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The area seemed secured, but two groups of goblins popped out of nowhere, one on either side of the huddled group of merchants.

I'd had good feedback from the militia in the last few encounters, so I casually ordered the charge. A few soldiers chased speargoblins south, while a hammerlord dove headfirst into the squad of axegoblins.

Engraved on the wall is an image of Medtob Mirrorsearched the dwarf and Aslot Sosbubsospu the goblin. Aslot sosbubsospu is striking down Medtob Mirrorsearched. The artwork relates to the killing of the dwarf Medtob Mirrorsearched by the goblin Aslot Sosbubsospu in Battlefailed in the late spring of 507.

Then came a harsh reminder of why I first underestimated the military: They are seriously underequipped for this kind of fight. The hammerdwarf and macedwarf K.O. 3 goblins between them, but not before Medtob was disemboweled. Iron axes, bronze maces and silver swords can't do enough damage fast enough, and our guys didn't have much in the way of armor either. I retreated as many soldiers into the fort as I can, but one was cut off by goblins and another two ran past the entrance toward the northern beach. I closed off the fort while the goblins were still chasing the elves and dwarves around, abandoning the remaining three dwarves on the surface in the hope I could wait it out.

Engraved on the wall is an image of Kikrost Ropelion the dwarf and Ngom Jackalwaxed the goblin. Kikrost Ropelion is striking down Ngom Jackalwaxed. The artwork relates to the killing of the goblin Ngom Jackalwaxed by the dwarf Kikrost Ropelion in Battlefailed in the late spring of 507.

```
Kikrost Godenkurel has been happy lately. She slept in the grass recently. She has vitnessed death. She ate a fine dish lately. She dined in a legendary dining roon recently. She gave somebody food lately. She slept in a good bedroon recently. She has complained of the lack of dining tables lately. She was disgusted by a miasma lately. She was caught in the rain recently. She took joy in slaughter lately. She admired own fine Bed lately. She was irritated by the sun lately. She sustained minor injuries recently.

She is a casual worshipper of Ikal Sanctuncradle.

She is a citizen of The Sword of Boots. She is a member of The Oar of Ankles. She is an enemy of Stukuludragis. She is an enemy of The Seductions of Focusing. She is an enemy of The Cremated Plague.

She is seventy-three years old, born on the 9th of Granite in the year 433.

Her right upper arm is broken. Her right upper arm is cut open. Her head is cut open. Her right hip is broken. Her skull is bruised.

She is nuscular. She has high cheekbones, and she has a deeply recessed, broad chin. Her aquamarine eyes are very round. She has a grating, raspy voice. Her teeth are widely-spaced. Her short nose is extraordinarily broad. Her hair is clean-shaven. Her lips are thin. Her ears have small lobes. Her right lover arm is gone. Her skin is cinnamon.
```

With the fort sealed I reactivated the outside soldiers to see them fight for my own amusement. A recruit died quickly, the other sworddwarf who ran past the entrance lead the goblins around the beach for a bit before taking one with him on the way out.

Kikrost Godenkurel, the Iron Vanguard, the axedwarf with an arm missing at the elbow and a dent in

her skull - She didn't go down so easily. She took on five goblins at once, brutalising the first she came across into a broken wreck. The other four decided they'd taken enough losses for one day, and retreated. Kikrost saw to it that the last of the goblins exit the map before collapsing on the grass to sleep, exhausted. The siege broken, the drawbridge was lowered and Kikrost walked back inside.

Engraved on the wall is an image of dwarves and humans. The dwarves are speaking with the humans. The artwork relates to the visit of merchants from The Union of Reputations to The Oar of Ankles at Battlefailed in the late summer of 507.

Engraved on the wall is an image of 'Krimson II' Drilledchanneled the dwarf. 'Krimson II' Drilledchanneled is engraving. The artwork relates to the creation of the masterful engraving The Prophesy of Watches by the dwarf 'Krimson II' Drilledchanneled in Battlefailed in the early autumn of 507.

Construction of my personal quarters is coming along at a steady pace. I have a team of engravers who have been going at it for some months now, the best of whom are Krimson II and a lady dwarf named Cog Racksects who have produced a handful of masterful and plenty of exceptional pieces between them.

Engraved on the wall is an image of Zasit Zulbanokol the kitten. The kitten is falling. The artwork relates to the passing of the kitten Zasit Zulbanokol in Battlefailed in the late autumn of 507.

Engraved on the wall is an image of 'Melkorp' Goldthunder the dwarf and Asno Ongnongom the goblin. Asno Ongnongom is shooting 'Melkorp' Goldthunder. The artwork relates to the killing of the dwarf 'Melkorp' Goldthunder by the goblin Asno Ongnongom in Battlefailed in the late autumn of 507.

An ambush popped up while a mason was out collecting something from a dead caravan. The bowgoblins let lose a hail of arrows at him, he didn't stand a chance. He was due to oversee the fort in a few months, too. Oh well.



Soldiers charged up the stairs to meet the ambush party head-on. First on the scene was none other than Kikrost the Iron Vanguard fresh out of hospital, who charged in alone and beat the macegoblin squad leader into the ground.

```
View Announcements
                 r: Reports
  View Civilizations
  Designations o: Set Orders
k: Look Around j: Job List
   Military s: Square Points/Routes/Notes
                 s: Squads
   Define Burrows
   Stockpiles
  Set Building Tasks/Prefs
View Rooms/Buildings
t: View Items in Buildings
  View Units
                 h: Hot Keys
  Nobles and Administrators
z: Status
Tab: Move this menu/map
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?: Help
;: Movies D: Depot Access
1: Artifacts
Space: Resume .: One-Step
```

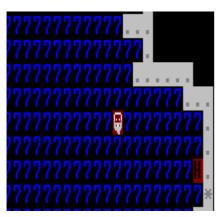
Meanwhile the caravan appeared on the horizon, only to run into another three goblin ambush squads. The guards ran straight into the fray.

```
View Announcements
   Building
                  r: Reports
  View Civilizations
   Designations o: Set Orders
   Look Around
                    Job List
   Military
                    Squads
   Points/Routes/Notes
   Define Burrows
   Stockpiles i: Zones
Set Building Tasks/Prefs
  View Rooms/Buildings
t: View Items in Buildings
  View Units
                 h: Hot Keys
   Nobles and Administrators
  Status
ab: Move this menu/map
          Escape: Options
D: Depot Access
?: Help
  Movies
l: Artifacts
Space: Resume .: One-Step
```

By the time the locals had finished up the first squad and advanced to the surface, the caravan guards had all but annhilated the goblins. The militia did a quick clean-up of a few skeletal rhesus macaques that were nipping at the heels of the merchant donkeys and everyone came inside for drinks.

Engraved on the wall is an image of Kikrost Ropelion the Geared Homage of Fur the dwarf. Kikrost Ropelion the Geared Homage of Fur is dead. The artwork relates to the drowning of the dwarf Kikrost Ropelion the Geared Homage of Fur in Battlefailed in the late winter of 507.

Kikrost Godenkurel Olonríbar âst, Iron Vanguard has drowned.

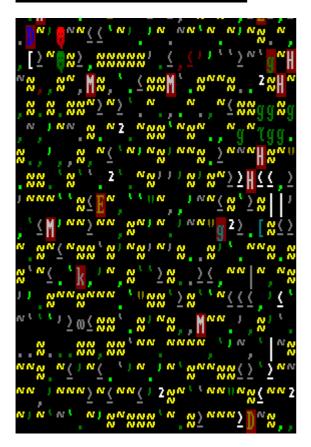


```
74 (37) The Kills of Kikrost Godenkurel Olonribar äst
Eleven Notable Kills
Lrugin the kobold, d. 506
Utes Werebogs the goblin, d. 506
Xuspgas Beardedblack the goblin, d. 506
Ngom Jackalwaxed the goblin, d. 507
Estrur Cursestar the goblin, d. 507
Ngoso Grandscourges the goblin, d. 507
Kutsmob Typhoonevil the goblin, d. 507
Snamoz Poisonjewels the goblin, d. 507
Zolak Hatedfondled the goblin, d. 507
Tode Versetick the goblin, d. 507
Xuspgas Listenedvice the goblin, d. 507
[welve Other Kills
One skeletal horse in Battlefailed
Two skeletal elk in Battlefailed
One elk in Battlefailed
One muskox in Battlefailed
One muskox in Battlefailed
```

A couple of skelks were hanging around the edge of the cliff spooking haulers who were trying to retrieve stuff from a dead caravan. Unworried, I sent up the main squad to put an end to the problem. Our resident Iron Vanguard arrived and started hacking them in half one by one - and then promptly dodged into the ocean. RIP Kikrost, you will be sorely missed. But not by the dwarves. They're too busy admiring the trade depot.

Engraved on the wall is an image of Athel Sabrepunched the Shameful Road of Smiths the dwarf and Bax Blackhobbled the goblin. Athel Sabrepunched the Shameful Road of Smiths is striking down Bax Blackhobbled. The artwork relates to the killing of the goblin Bax Blackhobbled by the dwarf Athel Sabrepunched the Shameful Road of Smiths in Battlefailed in the late winter of 507.

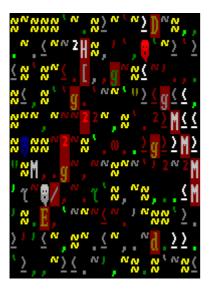
An ambush! Curse them!



I wasn't expecting goblins in a season without a trade caravan to beat up, but I already had soldiers near the surface from the de-elking exercise mentioned above. Willing to take advantage of the fact the bowgoblins elected to shoot nearby zombie muskoxen instead, I gave the order to charge. All but two soldiers ran inside to grab provisions.

Thanks largely to the new steel mail armor, they held their own until the militia commander arrived. Two more ambush squads appeared to the south, but they were kept busy with more of the local wildlife.

Undead rhesus macaques jumped into the fray, but a quick battle allowed our soldiers to charge south to the remaining goblins.



Victory, and only a few minor injuries.

Spring has arrived!

Created Wealth: Weapons:	880764* 25615*	Population:	72
Armor and Garb: Furniture: Other Objects:	92990* 106782* 316098*	Miners <mark>Woodworkers</mark> Stoneworkers	7 3 5 5
Architecture: Displayed: Held/Worn:	164217* 106127* 68935*	Rangers Metalsmiths Jewelers	5 3 5
Imported Wealth: Exported Wealth:	395103* 21327*	Craftsdwarves Nobles/Admins Peasants Dwarven Childrn	12 5 2 5 5
Food Stores: 360 Meat 354 See	5 ds 849	Fishery Workers Farmers Engineers	2 13 5
Fish 20 Dri Plant 217 Oth		Trained Animals Other Animals	A None A 56

TURN 10 - MELKORP

Dual overseering

Journal of Melkorp

I'm Melkorp Goldthunder: one happy camper, and that's a fact. Thirsty and miserable from wrestling the same rotting elk for five months straight? No, I'm ecstatic: had a decadent drink once. Openly weeping because my wife Id's just been trampled to death by rotting horses? 'Mok no, friend, I'm all smiles: admired another Trade Depot.

Now, some dwarves might tell you Melkorp's a few pieces short of a puzzlebox, or a little slow, but I've always felt right at home in Battlefailed.

Until now. Today, something's...off.

Hey, what am I doing out here past the gate anyway?



Ash, bones, junk, blood. Nothing wrong here! Well: more severed monkey hands than usual, but.



All these pillars I never got around to engraving. Hmm. Wait, where is everybody? Creiyd? Kagus?

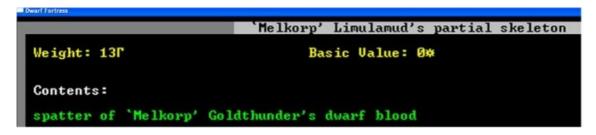


The Overseer's room, it's been ransacked or something...empty. Coffins lining the Deep Road. At the second turning I stop, compelled to move towards a shale casket...

Something about it...reach out to lift the lid



All of a sudden I don't feel so good



Hmm. I guess that explains all these.

Twangs a ghostly goblin arrow embedded in ghostly neck, thinks

How do I feel about this?



Official Minutes

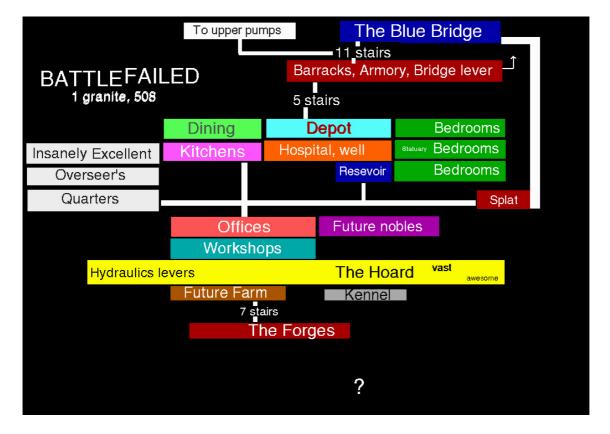
Emergency Quorum, Mayor Ringfell's office 508, 1 Granite

In attendance:

Ral Athelurus, Mayor
'Samrist' Dimplechannels, Militia (Cmndr)
'Creiyd' Clearlanterns, Manager
Goden Flagthrowers, Chief Medical
'Atreku' Airtraded, Arsenal
'Zathel' Mindfulgold, Bookkeeping

Permanent Barracks designated for the following squads: Earthen Scholars, Athel Astnonub Mostodtulon Eshtan (Cptn) Earthen Gloves, 'Samrist' Dimplechannels (Cmndr)

Motion to reinstate Overseer 'Turkey XIII' carried (unanimous)



The Diary of Turkey XIII Pulledportal

508, 2 Granite

It's official: I'm to Oversee the fortress for the year 508 in the stead of the genial but unlucky Melkorp Goldthunder. Wonderful. I think a few more gem windows for the Quarters are in orddddddd---- (illegible)

The Journal of Melkorp

I live.

Thanks for the loan, Turkey: I promise to take good care of this body.

TO DO:

Dismantle all Upper Battlefailed levers
Kill Kittens
Military training: now individual discretion

The whole of the original first level is now a refuse pile. Our overtaxed butcher's shop is finally uncluttered, and more are being built. If Battlefailed has an inexhaustable resource, it is bones.

The Spring is mild. In dismantling the old levers, I only managed to inadvertantly flood two, three rooms at most before our masons could react. Forgotten beasts roam the caverns, vainly seeking a way in. The legendary hoard increases. Our steel-clad soldiers grow ever stronger. By the stone, 508 will be a bbbbbbbbbbb-- (illegible)

Diary of Turkey XIII Pulledportal

The spring was peaceful, productive. Why couldn't I remember any of it? This latest batch of whip wine must be getting the better of me, I thought: I'd suddenly find myself in odd corners of Upper Battlefailed, no idea how I got there. Robocorn stopped me to say how much he liked the new Battlefailed maps that hang in the corridors... but who hung them? I thought to confide in my diary, strange new entries in a hand not my own...is it possible? If I am possessed, where is my arftifact? Does -- oh no not agggggggggg (illegible)

Journal of Melkorp

Summer, Overseer Melkorp reporting.

Well, everyone's getting a bed and a cabinet. I caused, or rather Turkey and I caused a smallish wall to be erected around the original entrance, just a modest zombie-free slice of the surface to call our own. But that's not what I want to tell you.



A score of macemen and their captain, bow drawn, riding a fell beast. It seems I'm to have the unique pleasure of avenging my own death. The Earthen Scholars and Earthen Gloves are quickly sent to the entrance, with it's six new cage traps. The plan being: let the cage traps fall on 3 to 6 of them, then the counterattack. While the goblins clear the field of zombie horses, an unlucky kobold thief is quickly dealt with, and then all is ready.

The goblins decisively advance. Zefon Whippuzzles enters a martial trance, breaks ranks, and charges straight for the Goblin Chief on his Rutherer. Sigh. Well, when in Battlefailed, as the adage goes. Both squads charge. Bolts and silver maces alike bounce harmlessly off of shining dwarven steel. Goblin limbs arc through the air. Beautiful. Only their mounted leader escapes alive.

You know what they say about the optimal temperature of vengeance? Absolutely true. Another pair of kobold thieves are anticlimactically dispatched.

Sigun Hamerack, Ingish Letterseared, and squad leader Athel kill a kobold each. Krimson II gets one, and Zefon Whippuzzles decapitates two goblins and earns the name the Clear Craft of Beaks. But the battle goes to Rakust Battlearrows, with 8 goblins slain (they're calling him the Creepy Omen of Thunder, excellent).

Ingish Letterseared broke an elbow, leg, and a couple of ribs and had to be carried down by Zathel, but Doc Goden is with him now. I imagine he'll wear *both* gauntlets into battle next time. In celebration I have arrrrrrrrrr (illegible)

The Diary of Turkey XIII

(no date)

"Keep it up, Turkey!" "Great Summer, Turkey!" I smile, keep moving, head down. Can't let them see my eyes...

I never know when it will happen, or how long it will last. The last time oh no you gotta be 'Mokkkkkkkkk' (illeqible)

The journal of Melkorp

--tinued survival of our... oh no. Where?

This must be Battlefailed: at least that certainly *looks* like my friend Moldath Paddleflag being gored by a skorse on the refuse pile. The Scholars arrive too late to save him. The first death on my watch. How long have I been away?

1 Galena

After almost two months of surgery, Ingish, our only casualty from the last siege, is back on his feet in the barracks, training at his own pace. Glad of a good outcome. By the stone, I am happy to be back on this plane of existence, endless zombie beast wars or no. Cavebrands is more stressful somehow, being at a much more crucial point in it's history. Battlefailed has ever lived as if on the point of a knife, but in 508, it is as if the balance has gently, decisively tipped towards survival.

21 galena

The humans, slow to trade, were predictably ambushed. Athel Crafteddragons died resetting a cage trap. Stupid cage traps, I was a fool for erecting them, when the goal is to keep dwarves off the surface. That's 3 dead on my watch. Which, for a population of 88, is probably the safest 9 months in Battlefailed history.

We'll never be free of these 'Mok-damned zombies till somebody forbids each and every item on the surface. But who's got ttttttttttt-- (illegible) kkkkking kidding me.

Oh the bastard's done it again (illegible)

Hmm. Turkey's hands shake when I reach for the diary. Good thing this is my last season.

22nd Timber

The Queen's caravan arrived on schedule, and was punctually attacked by skorses. I have a point south of the entrance I've named point 19, and I send the Earthen Gloves and the Earthen Scholars there. It suffices to get the caravan safely inside. Our reputation as the Merchant's Graveyard is surely dire enough.

19th Moonstone

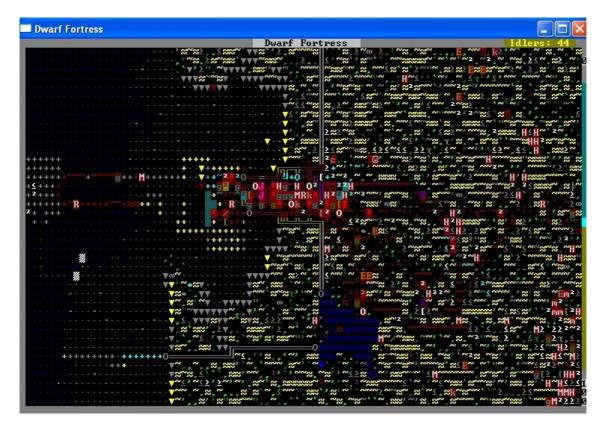
Limul Paddledblocks went mad, I've no idea why. Stands there weeping. I'll set a coffin aside for her.

4th Opal

Decimated more skorse herds for practice. Rakust the Creepy Omens of Thunder is now an Axe Lord, despite some nasty wounds that don't seem to be receiving attention. Health care is slipping, a peasant just died of infection.

15th Obsidian What's that rumbling?

10 goblin swordsmen and a swordmaster. 9 goblin bowmen and a master lasher, all mounted on rutherers, jabberers, and Giant Olms. Plus 7 trolls. They waste their advantage killing the local skoxes, while all squads are sent to wait below the few cage and weapons traps. The Troll shock troops are slaughtered, and the Earthen Gloves join the Earthen Scholars in a counterattack, hacking the bowmen's mounts out from under them and running them down in the field.



The carnage is indescribable. Most of the blood in this picture belongs to Lokum Stockadesyrups, sadly.

Dwarven Casualties: Lokum Stockadesyrups, bled out from a silver arrow in the hand Goblin casualties: 20 Goblins, 6 Trolls, Numerous Jabberers, Rutherers, and Giant Olms.

Prisoners: 1 goblin swordmaster, 1 goblin swordsman, 2 jabberers, 2 trolls

A tired feeling. My spirit is fading. Someone is coming to bury Lokum.

Turkey, I've had a chair built out of microcline for you to relax in, right there on the beach: you'll probably, um, want to use it. You can sit with your back to the ashy charnel plain and watch the gentle, blue, malodorous waves roll in. The slate chair next to it, stained blue with troll's blood?

That's for me. Beyond the velvet lies, there lies a truth of steel, the vision never dies, life's a never ending wheel... who said that?

TURN 11 - ANDREUS

Battlefailed, postdwarven capital of the world

25th Obsidian, 208

Andreus II Shembidok Postdwarvenist

It has become clear to me that the problems with Battlefailed, both practical and philosophical, are indicative not of a flaw in specific dwarves but of flaws in the dwarven condition itself. It has become apparent that the old answers to tyranny and poverty are inadequate. I've required several years to contemplate this problem effectively. The checks and balances of dwarven society were created because they realise how unfit they are to govern themselves, but the intrinsic flaws of the individual are reflected in the societies they create. Thusly, any society that dwarves create will be by definition tainted by the flaws in dwarven nature.

The solution, then, is not to invent a better society, but to address the flaws in dwarven nature itself.

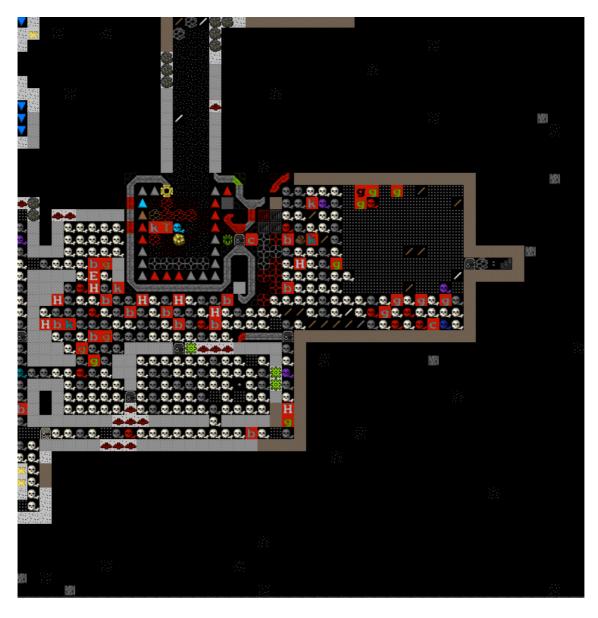
I will create the world's first postdwarven society, here in Battlefailed, and those who dwell in this fortress shall become the first citizens.

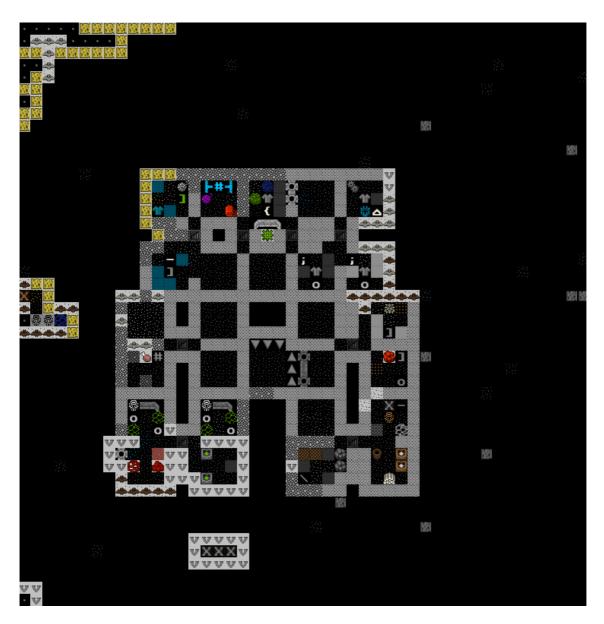
17th Granite, 509



I have appropriated the overseer's quarters. I considerations that must be made to allow the formation of a new civilization will need to be made in considerable comfort. I feel no shame or hypocricy in this for when history vindicates my ideas and the new world order shines out across the

realm, there will be no-one left with the need to quibble over a few creature comforts, for we will be beyond want and need.





Heck, if I can even make this place worthy to live in, they'll hail me as a genius.

It's clear that in the gap between my tenures as overseer we've had nothing but brain-dead swillheads and self-serving, arrogant pompous fools with no concern for anything but their own agenda. Thusly, it will be neccessary to remove the symbols of their reign as swiftly as possible. I was delighted to find that the gem window that was shamelessly stolen from my old sanctum before its mystical energies were ruined by the placement of a large number of corpses inside of it is now in the overseer's quarters, giving me a truly amazing view of the cavern below.

My first major project will be to flood the cave lake with magma and turn it into obsidian. Because that's what postdwarvenists do. We flood things.

With magma.

But in an entirely postdwarven manner.

18th Felsite, 509

Two important arrivals and one important consideration have occured.

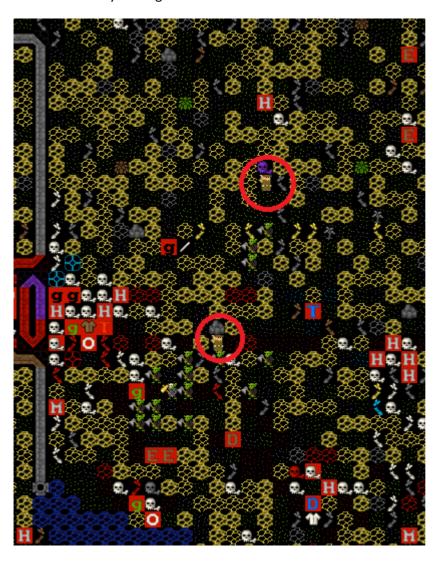
The first important arrival: dwarven migrants.

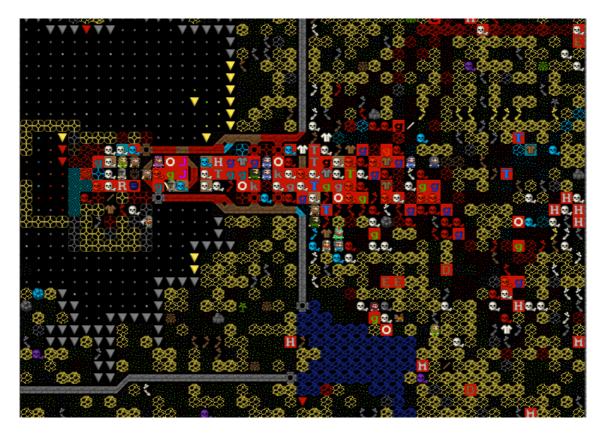


The second important arrival: a vile force of darkness.

The important consideration: I have absolutely no idea which lever to pull to seal the fortress.

By an abnormally large blessing of good fortune, the elves arrived at the same time as the goblins, and are currently serving as a distraction.





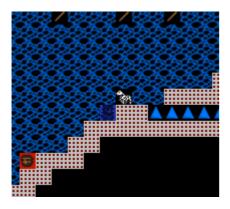
28th Felsite, 509

The goblin siege has been utterly destroyed - a few have been taken prisoner and will await my consideration of some suitable example of postdwarvenist punishment. I estimate between ten and fifteen dwarves fell in the assault - including Rakust Battlearrows the Creepy Omen of Thunder, Axelord - tragic victims of the unenlightened savagery of the goblin hordes. On a lighter note, the magma pump project that will flood the cave with obsidian nears completion.

8th Hematite, 509



GLRBLLLLRBLLLL!



GRLBRBRLRBLL - IT'S PERFECTLY FINE TO EXPORT NATIVE GOLD ITEMS AGAIN - HGGRRGKKGGLLghkkgblrblbll... brll... blll...



19th Hematite, 509

Cog Ledevost 🏻 Mason 🖔s Guild 🥛

corny and unneccessary crack of thunder

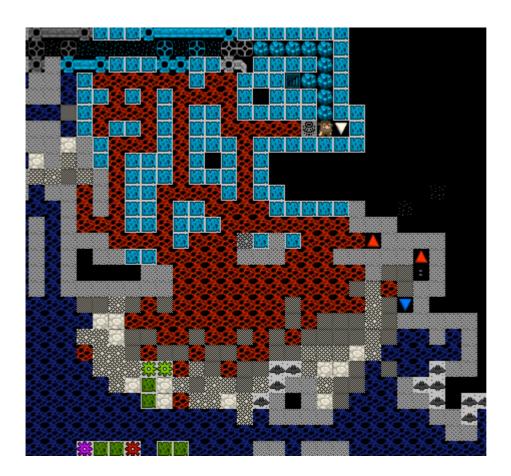
Andreus IIIA Ledevosta Postdwarvenist Infomorph

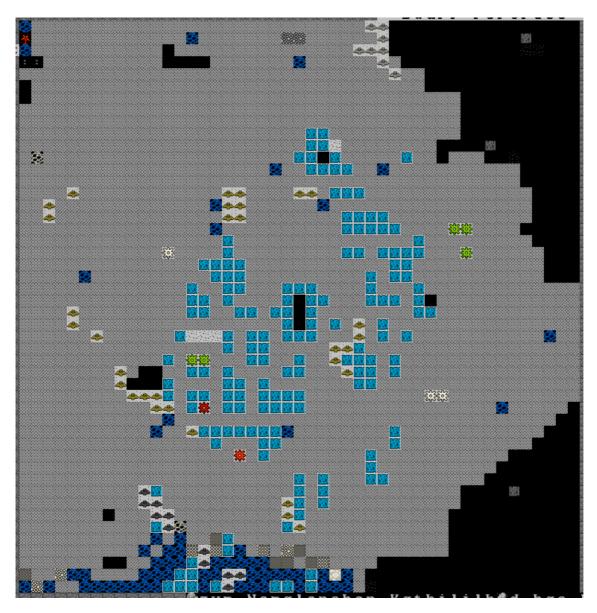
7th Malachite, 509

Yes.

The magma pump is complete! Now we can live the postdwarvenist dream of... lava! And water!







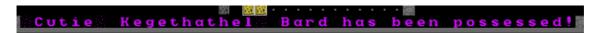
I'm not entirely sure how exactly this relates to the postdwarvenist ideal of curing elements of the dwarven condition... but it sure looks cool.

12th Malachite, 509

Actually, on reflection, it seems to be an intrinsic flaw in the dwarven condition that we regularly perform dangerous, illogical and entirely unneccessary things without really knowing why. Why do dwarven miners sometimes decide to hack through thin pillars of rock supporting entire cave ceilings? Why will some dwarves knowingly wall themselves into large constructions, dooming themselves to death from starvation or thirst? Why do dwarves sometimes run out to collect trinkets and clothes from warriors fallen in battle with elite goblins? Why do dwarves mine adamantium when they know what lies beneath it? When the legendary **WEAPON** was built in Headshoots, who was the person who first had the concept? I ponder the magma pump at night and ask myself from whence actually came the idea, and I cannot work it out.

I meander into baseless speculation here, but it seems to me as if all dwarves are driven by some force that we are unable to resist, yet cannot quite understand or put our finger on. If, truly, that is so, then escaping beyond this force is surely the only way in which a postdwarven society could possibly flourish?

8th Galena, 509



We've just had another possession. But what if it is in fact, us that are possessed?

17th Galena, 509

The mysterious construction is underway - but what mysterious construction has been wrought with our own hands?

26th Galena, 509

```
Cutie Kegethathel Bard has created Silniral a cobaltite scepter!

Press Enter to close window

Silniral Planesportents a cobaltite scepter

This is a cobaltite scepter All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality It is encircled with bands of bronze rope reed fiber giant cave spider silk and oyster shell This object menaces with spikes of cobaltite purple spinel and heliodor On the item is an image of Scarcebent the Hermitic Rhyme the perfect purple spinel in tunnel tube
```

This scepter - is it a symbol of the grandeur of our civilization, or a reminder to us of all its flaws?

Oh, and we had another goblin siege and half our militia was killed, so I drafted 8 additional dwarves to fill out the ranks. Hopefully they'll become at least marginally proficient before the next problem shows up.

That leads me to more musing about what exactly possessed anyone to think that setting up in this sand-blasted, zombie-infested hellhole was a good idea. Why did we do it? What force compelled us to make such an ill-advised decision when there were places far more abundant with resources and less abundant with zombies and goblins. Why did we not go somewhere the goblins could not reach?

26th Galena, 509

```
A towering slug composed of yellow diamond. It has wings and it appears to be emaciated. Beware its deadly spittle!

Its right wing is burned. Its body is burned. Its left wing is burned.
```

In improving the magma delivery system such that more of the lake can be solidified, it seems we have accidentally channelled magma down an abandoned tunnel that seemed to be some sort of drainage system that emptied into the magma lake beneath the forges. Horrific screams were heard from down there - I'm not entirely sure what the heck they're coming from.

Diary of task manager Creiyd Edusil, Excerpts

The completion of the magma plumbing was recieved with much joy, too rare a resource in these troubled days. Between the barbarian goblins and the monsters of bone, we've seen too many dwarves die too soon.

And there is something strange is going on here. Several dwarves are complaining about lapses of memory, fainting spells, or actions made without understanding what or why at the time.

I fear either the inherent evil of the land has begun to subjugate our minds, or the abhorrent state of Lur's Temple has angered His Feminence and invoked a curse against us. I must persuade the overseer to do something before it's too late.

Andreus' Logs

10th Opal, 509

A dwarf - a former overseer, I believe - came up to me today and asked me to consider Lur's temple.

I don't even know where it is.



Diary of Creiyd Edusil, Excerpts

11th Opal, 509

When Battlefailed is struck by the gods and the rescue party finds this text, know that it wasn't my fault.

TURN 12 - ROBOCORN

Class act

Diary of Robocorn, Recollections of postmortem

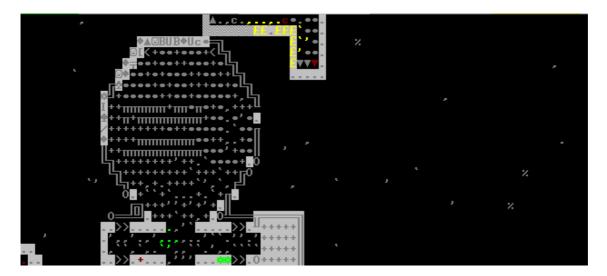
A lot of stuff happened in hell, I wrestled with a three eyed moose with purple feathers that spat poison, I got to find out what bone meal tastes like (a bit dry really but not entirely offensive), I suffered pain in places that I didn't even have when I was alive, and I learned that the management of hell were a bunch of malignant fiends (not that I hadn't suspected it before). Apparently having found I had not suffered enough in his chamber of corrupt intentions (I did kinkier stuff when I was alive) the head ass demon decided it would be really funny to send me BACK to Battlefailed, the place where they broke both my legs, starved me, and strangled me to death. Before I had any say in the matter the bastards astral kicked my ass back out into the windy world.



As I phased through the ether I saw the blasted place, I hoped with my heart that nobody was there and I could leave. It looked like an invasion had been going on, maybe everyone was dead and I could go back to hell



The halls I floated through were bare and filled with rubble and old furniture. Everyone must have died in a goblin invasion. I bet Led is real pround of herself having sent all o me fellow dwarves to their doom.



There were tunnels going for miles under the rock I was just about to leave when I hear a sound. A sound of merriment.

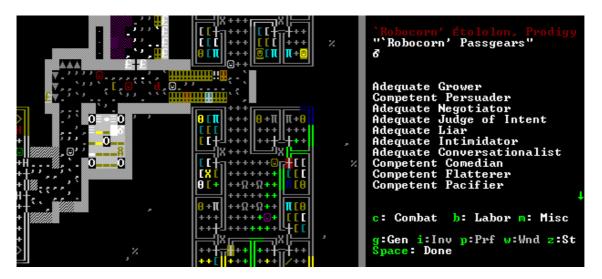


What in the buttery devil is this?

A dwarven utopia, like Led had promised. A place where we didn't have to put up with any humans and their high ceilings or any of those Ngerxungs or emxas that Led made us recite. It was beautiful.

Until I remembered what the bastards did to me when I was alive. Those sons of bitches were going to pay!

There were many hosts I'd seen throughout this new Battlefailed, one even had been called Robocorn II which seeed more like an insult she was trying to throw off than any real nickname. I decided to start fresh with a little dwarven boy, nobody would notice if he got a little more spunk.



I'd show those bastards what for, there'll be no celebrating while I'm back, and I intend to live a full life now.

In the days of old we dwarves have had a great tradition of hosing our enemies down until they die. Be it water or

magma, my forebearers have done well with this formula. I will however do one better.



A sea, a great underground reservoir of toxic slime left by some reeking abomination that climbed outta hell to make sure I was having fun. When I saw this horrifying mire of bodily fluid, I new I must delve to employ it for my own benefit. A dangerous task, but if I was interested in saving lives I wouldn't have made the plan in the first place.

I'm beginning to see the folly of choosing the body of a child. The only people who listen to you are idiots. here they are wandering around out in the skelk infested wilds with no equipment just asking to be slaughtered outright. The bastards have yet t' learn a thing from living in Battlefailed. Even after I tell 'em not to bother with the damn discarded bolts they refuse to go in because something has spooked them.

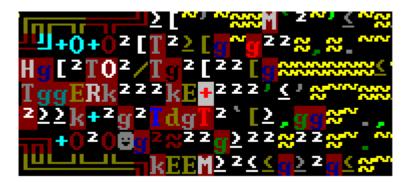
Skelks.

I send out a legendary axedwarf to take out the skelks as well as the other parties.



It does not go as planned, though I feel it is a little cathartic to see the successor of the dwarf that strangled me to

death being beaten by skelks. Maybe if he lives I can drop him in to the toxic sea to fight the demon turtle.



Much to my amusement, Krimson 2 is joined by a swordsman with a broken arm and a recruit. Really guys, where did

all these dead goblins come from? were they on sale?

Eventually the recruit manages to take down the skelks with his bare hands and leaves the two pathetic crippled soldiers to rot on the beach, class act, class act.

In a totally unrelated measure, a previously enamored dwarf who had been working on some project in the workshop

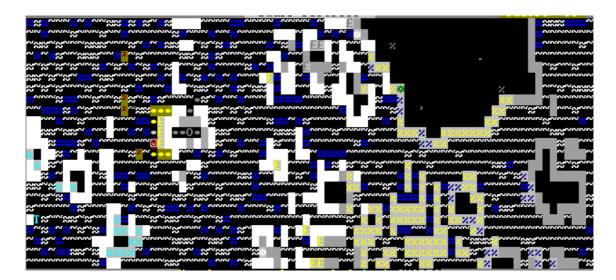
finally showed his finished product.



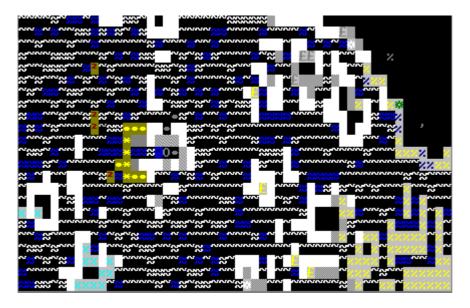
Well at least I won't be getting a bad back.

The first casualty of my reign is a legendary miner, I'd never heard of him so he can't be that great, he fell to his doom in the sea to nobody's surprise. I just wish he'd lived long enough to let me know what kind of pain the secretion has.

I'm itchin' to find that out.



Our second casualty in the construction was another miner, the poor fella was coated in the slime but didn't show any abnormal signs. He must've been too busy drowning to help with the important task of diagnosing poisons.



It dinnae matter anyway, we've got plenty of dwarves, an' you'll find soon enough that I'm not picky about me workers,

If ye got arms an legs y' can milk a camel, design a screw pump, an dig through twent metric tonnes o' rock, an th' absence of which does nae disqualify yah from doing these things either



It was barely a month before I got my first batch of goblin visitors, It's a shame the part favors aren't ready yet. I greeted the greenskins the way the queen always greeted us dwarves, with a traditional goblin welcome of "Osat garu-slömod! Reko-ruspkes. ugsmez-êl emxasnuz!" I then let out a hearty laugh like Led always did after the greeting, hoping they would just go away. For some reason it made them come at us faster. Maybe, I put the wrong inflections on it.



I begin my victory over the goblin horde by bringing everyone inside, (including a bunch o elves that happened to be in the area), unfortunately somebody put all of the levers, all the same color in the same room. When I find out what wise guy did this I'm going to have them keelhauled.

It is at this time that I learn that NONE of the levers in the lever room control the drawbridge and that the designers of the fort for the last nine years have long awaited their chance to fuck with me.



The obvious solution is to throw soldiers at them.

This of course fails, and much of the idiot surface dwellers die. Meanwhile we're enjoying a bit of wet weather underground due to the DAMN DROWNING TRAP. I've isolated the lever that caused it but nobody's prepared to pull the damn thing. I can see why I was sent back here.



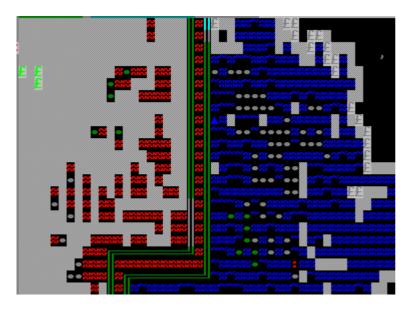
I'll give this to the elves, they've got some pretty big balls. I make the most of their ridiculous ballsiness by unloading all of our crappy stone projects that I made the peons do to get rid of stone and badly damaged clothing. The bastards clearly can't tell the difference between a good deal and an employment as garbagemen.

Naturally, as with all my good plans, it falls flat on its face the elves refuse to accept my gifts, cheeky bastards, I'd sleep with their princess out of spite, I probably wouldn't even enjoy it I'd just do it to create a longlasting conflict with them so I could hose them down with fluid.

I hope Okolobok is comfy, cause I still have to wait out the unending flood trap that's drowning the entire fort.

I think I may be losing a bit of myself to this body. I've acquired his likes and dislikes and have used my considerable charisma to dig us a room in a vein of silver, which I now love. The little guy hasn't disappointed in the hair department either and has enough friends to ensure his constant political influence. I'll have to do something in return for this little guy, though he may have to wait until puberty to enjoy it.

In other news I've managed to close the maintenance shaft for the Fort Flooder and through a bit of fortuitous misconstruction, all of the water drained into Andreus's lava field from last year instead of killing us. What good fortune.



With much experimentation I managed to get all of the floodgates closed. Now all we have to do is periodically trim the fungal wood that will grow all over the trade route for years to come.

The elves left this month and brought to my attention that the goblins who arrived in slate were **still here**, beating on any dwarf dumb enough to be outside. and let me tell you, there were around twenty, camping outside in fear of the two goblins. It was utterly anticlimactic to see both goblins easily struck down by a lone macedwarf. Is there no limit to the shame I feel about this place.



As my room was beginning to be completed, I decided to do a favor for future generations and make a lever to control the front moat (which I had been told had no lever and was useless as a defense measure), to remove any issures regarding identification, I made it in the corner of a room, away from any other levers, out of ilmenite, of which there is only one mechanism, and surrounded it with orthoclase to remove any doubt that this was the lever that controlled the front drawbridge.



The rest of spring was comparably calm to the early spring, and summer came calmly too. I'm beginning to wish Led were here so she could see how well we've made out here, also because that bony old human would hate living in the dank underground with us. I've engineered a plan I hope can bring this into fruition as well as get rid of all the worthless rocks lying around. It's a simple plan, one that involves making thousands of rock mugs and giving them away for free. If giving away useless junk isn't the true meaning of wealth then I don't know what is.

It was just another summer afternoon while I was telling the damn architects to build screw pumps they'd crewed up on earlier when I got reports of something like a giant toad that breathes fire in the second cavern. This is clearly an opportunity to flaunt our military and eat lots of toad meat.



To cease the constant distractions caused by the undead wildlife, I put it upon myself to close the door, cutting us off from the outside world. I don't miss it at all.

I seem to be running into a problem lately, when I tell my followers to build a screw pump, they'll go to the site, set up the designs, bring all of the materials to the site, and then the mason who was contracted to build the pump will declare that it cannot be built and will remove the plans and leave the components to lie on the site. I have over fifty of the pumps to make and the gall of these dwarves is not helping any. They shouldn't have a say in whether or not it gets built. If I want a wall built between a hostile dragon and an erupting volcano, they better damn well burn to death building that wall or I'll have something worse prepared for them.

Speaking of which, I had decided to fortify the wall around our aboveground territory. Almost immediately, the masons decided that they would prefer not to do this project that justified their continued existence. The saw no reason to get off their lazy asses and work like they'd refused to work on the pump stack, as I was ready to prepare some exquisite revenge we got some guests.



Ensuring that my fortifications would not be built for some time.

Continuing with our theme of failure a human caravan shows up but refuses to do anything because

our bridge is drawn, and will not be undrawn until our green friends leave. They show no signs of doing so as they've joined another ambush squad to have a tea party.

It was nearly a week until they gave up and went home. The humans brought many things and I'll see if I can't unload some of our useless stone on them. This season has been a constant disappointment and I dinnae think it has ever stopped raining for the last three months. The liason will be here next season and we'll see if we can't get someone swanky here to suffer with us.



This mornin' I tried to convince old Andreus 3 to do a masterful engraving of naked ladies over my bed. He refused, and when I said he could just do an exeptional engraving he stormed off, muttering something about post-dwarvenism and cosmic power. He should have more sympathy from me, I have to go through puberty TWICE.

In less important news, the humans have finished their week long trek to our trade depot. If they have anything at all, I'll buy the heaviest stuff so they can carry the greatest amount of worthless stone crafts away.



Autumn's finally come, the rain will stop and those bastards from Graspedseduce will come and see how prosperous their "Dwarven paradise" is. They'll give us their least favorite baron and I'll give them terrible rocks. But what if that isn't enough. I'll have to come up with something.

When I traded with the humans they were much more friendly than any of the humans in Graspedseduce they had plenty of stuff to justify selling off damaged clothing and rock crafts.



They are however, a bit lethargic with the leaving portion of trade, the part where they take the goods home or somewhere else entirely. Their lethargy troubles me. While it would be great if they just died, I gave them all of our throwaway stone goods and I really don't want more junk lying around this godforsaken dump.

The pump stack is doing terribly, It may take the entire year to finish it, regardless, the slime shooter will be completed, come hell or high water, which are both entirely plausible setbacks at this point.

On a lighter note, our tall garbagemen only took two months to get their sorry asses out of our hair and I don't miss them in the slightest. Tell your warlords we've got plenty more garbage where that came from!



The blistering breakneck pace at which these screw pumps are being produced is staggering. Almost two, in a month? you masons and architects must be proud of yourselves. We seem to have one miner and she has a deathwish, I thought it might have been my doing that killed most of them off, but it seems they were really a suicidal lot. I can't blame them for coming to Battlefailed then if that

was their mission, oughta speed up the process anyway.

It's not like we're running out of food, but we could use more. I've decided to create a whole new plot for plump helmets to help keep the bastards fed. It's boring but it needs to be done.

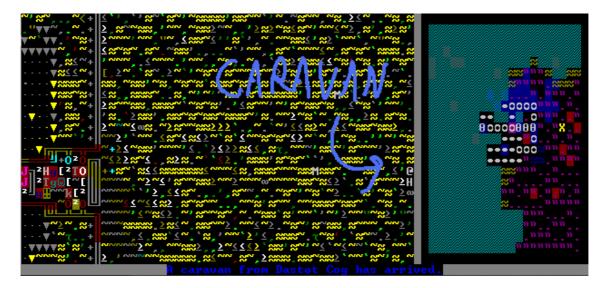


The pump stack has been going well, the aboveground fortifications don't seem to have too many hangups and just because I can I'm putting together a litt-SHIT



No literally, a giant flying blob of stinking shit. if this thing gets in we're all dead. I can only rely on the caution employed by my predecessors to ward off flying enemies. AUUGH

Finally, the caravan has come from the mountainhomes. I'll unload our bone and rock goods (I've found bone is as abundant here as stone for obvious reasons) We just have to hope no goblins show up.



You've gotta have pity for those merchants, If I was a sniveling pissant from the cushy obsidian towers of graspedseduce I'd be scared shitless of this place allow me to unobscure our front gate.



I'm resisting the urge to shout "Welcome to Fucking Battlefailed!" over the bloodstained walls of our carrion littered slice of hell. Nonetheless, this is a great opportunity to bring all of our trashcrafts to the garbage-depot. Just in case you didn't know, if I never saw another piece of frigging gabbro again it would be too soon.

```
Large Cut Gems
                              gabbro scepter
                                                                              Distance:
                                                                                                       [PENDING]
                              gabbro scepter
gabbro ring
Sand
                                                                              Distance:
                                                                                                       [PENDING]
Glass
                                                                              Distance:
                              gabbro crown
gabbro bracelet
gabbro scepter
        Blocks
                                                                                                       [PENDING]
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Stone
Trap Components
Bodywear
                                                                                                       [PENDING]
                                                                             Distance:
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Headwear
                                                                              Distance:
Handwear
                                                                              Distance:
                              gabbro scepter
-gabbro amulet-
-gabbro figurine of a bat-
Footwear
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Legwear
Shields
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Pets
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                              gabbro scepter
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*Finished Goods
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Cheeses
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Powders
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Extracts
Crafts
                                                                             Distance:
                                                                              Distance:
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Toys
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Unfortunately, the thought of crappy useless stone crafts draws in a goblin raiding party, maybe our "competent" "warriors" can dispatch them.



If it surprises you at all, then you haven't been paying attention. But the goblins armed with whips manage to chew their way through our front lines until some real warriors show up. A digruntles band of goblins waits outside because I'm not stupid enough to open the door.

down in the fort I unload a ton of useless crap we collected from corpses and craftwork and had to buy all of his anvils to just get him to fit it all on the mules. The guy looked like he was about to hump my leg after we made the deals.

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Onol: Ah, wonderful. Thank you for your business.

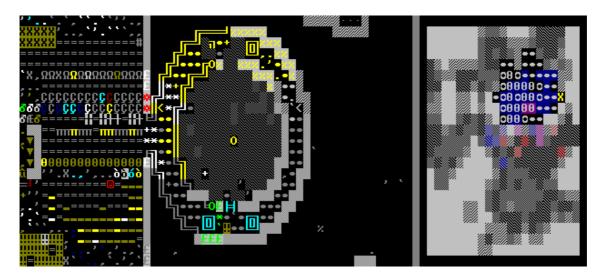
Onol seems ecstatic with the trading.
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He keeps telling me that he has a schedule, but I find that if I open the front door to let Onol out, then he'll let in the asshole goblins who are currently loitering outside our walls. I'll have those battle hardened Battlefailed warriors go and kill them as I open the door.

On a lighter note some poor woodcrafter has become possessed and will likely produce something of little or no value.



Hooray!



The goblins are here and they won't stop being a bother, They greatly outnumber our warriors and I consider this a great time to throw our best soldiers at them and hope for the best.



This proves verily effective, It seem that all of our effective strategy involves sending three dwarves named Èzum, Sigun, and Zon. Legendary Axedwarf, Hammerdwarf, and swordsdwarf respectively, demolshing dosens of goblins while the goblins beat the life out of craftsdwarves or masons. A fine strategy if I don't say so myself.

Is it just me or is every goblin named Stozu?



Well, saves me having to learn their names when putting them in gladiatorial combat.

Speaking of which, in our gladiatorial arena that has yet to be finished one of our miners was caught in a freak accident and made gravity her bitch. We're currently working on plans to get her down.



In more disappointing news our possessed friend made for us a barrel, what is strange is that the barrel has an image of itself on it. A major problem with the possession of an amazingly ornate barrel is that I can't have it placed in my room for personal use.

```
This is a tower-cap barrel. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encircled with bands of acacia and gold. This object menaces with spikes of tower-cap and black pyrope. On the item is an image of Scorchedlove the magnetite armor stand in mica. On the item is an image of The Flash of Beaks the tower-cap barrel in sard.
```

Oh well. We've had no luck in lowering Melbil's body, a levitating corpse is a great ornament for a gladiatorial arena don't you think?

Well, The merchants are getting ready to leave and the liaison has yet to come. Those bastards aren't goign to follow protocol, they're going to leave us without proper representation, without proper law enforcement and without a proper philosopher, we can't make do with these posts-dwarvenist guys, they're awful, I want someone who thinks like me only moreso.

It seems as though my demeanor has rubbed off on the populace, they all walk around hunched over and grumbling about their dead idiot friends or their dead idiot dog who thought Stozu was a real friendly guy. The only problem with this is that other dwarves will not "nut up" and get on with their lives so I've come to the conclusion that I have to smooth and engrave everything to make them all feel better about their mediocrity. I'l let them throw parties and drink all the beer and be merry. I've had my legs broken enough times to know of dwarven instability.



A legendary miner that goes by the name of mathlc threw a tantrum today, and by threw a tantrum I mean he ripped an architect in fucking half. **IN FUCKING HALF!**As an encore, he rips an arm and a leg off of a fisherdwarf.



Is it too early to sic the earthen gloves on this maniac?

Some other whacko with anger management issues manages to unfurrow an area of soil with the pure force of his rage.



In an entirely unrelated note, I'm ramping up coffin production and giving everyone snuggly warm beds where they can forget all their troubles.

The tantrums have been getting a little less frequent since I started making the new graves, and as a bonus I get to figure out who died on my watch, like Creiyd who must have contributed to this place while I was in hell, and cutiebard who thought this was a community fort a couple months ago.

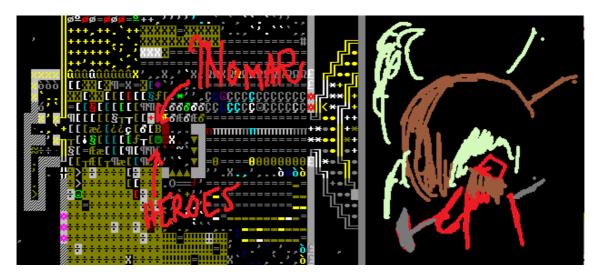


Well I've only got two months left to go and it seems like everything's been breaking down, but I'm sure it couldn't get much worse than it is now. Wait' what's that?



I'm speechless...

So after I lost my speechlessness, I decided to write down the situation at hand. There is a giant blob of filth spraying toxic gas all over the central area where all of our food is located and our best warriors are having little luck bringing it down.



This is all part of the experience.

After hours of beating the horrifying blob of stinking muck with their warhammers and crossbows, the beast finally collapsed into a filthy heap of putrid goo. The brave soul who took out the beast. *Shem shipdusts* will be given the title "shitslayer" because "Shem Shipdusts, Shit Slayer" is an amazingly fortuitous tongue twister

Funny enough that gas that Nomar kept farting out was harmless and caused "numbness" and minor nausea. It just goes to show that even the scariest monsters can be really pathetic when fought head on and that we shouldn't believe all of this lore about the deadly powers of the forgotten beasts and should fight ahead even when confronted with seemingly insurmountable odds because even in the hellwasted pit that is Battlefailed sometimes good fortune smiles upon us...

Just kidding. Anyone who got anywhere near Nomar died of critical lung failure

```
→Deduk Nugrethtulon, Cheese Maker has suffocated.

Sodel Alåthusir, Dyer has suffocated.

Tekkud Libadmörul, Cheese Maker has suffocated.

Fath Berrigoth, Dwarven Baby has suffocated.

Goden Astrovod, Dwarven Baby has suffocated.

Monom Kivishamkin, Herbalist has suffocated.

`Andreus III' Ledevost, Postdwarvenist Infomorph has suffocated.

→Dodók Dumatnoglesh, Dwarven Baby has suffocated.

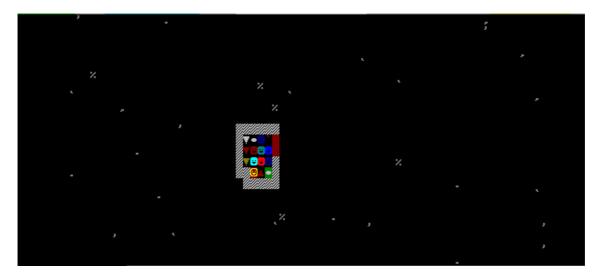
Shem Zuglarvesh, Shitslayer has suffocated.

Cerol Inethkol, Farmer has suffocated.
```

So now I've got my first Berserker. Some trapper guy who nobody will miss.



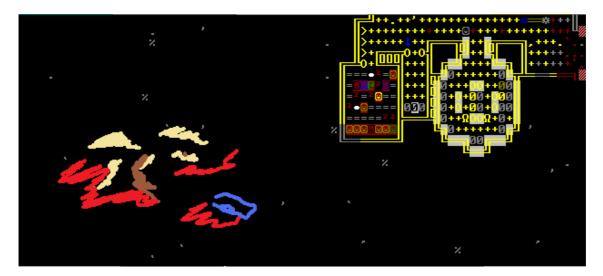
The guy is immediately set upon by the trained soldiers but refuses to die even when five six eight soldiers are pounding him into the floor simultaneously, he even manages to kill one of them. Fortunately some axemen arrive and chop him to bits. better'n I had, lucky fool.



Only a few weeks later a stonecrafter goes berserk. Guess I won't be getting any more +gabbro mug+s outta her. I scrambled the fortress defense force and they struck her down post haste. I think I might prefer hell to Battlefailed after all. I wonder if Xubkib will take me back if I go back to hell.

I'm not proud of it, but we've run out of coffins. I've just been piling up the corpses in the rooms in

upper battlefailed where we seldom dwell, I'm not looking forward to the ramifications of this, but I haven't got any other choice, all of my masons are out tantrumming



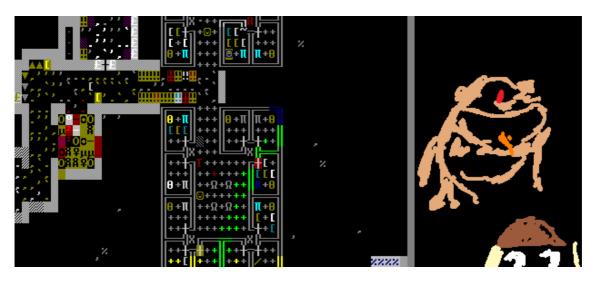
Today, a glassmaker went berserk and got in a fistfight with an unarmed recruit. The fight left lots of vomit around the upper levels of the fort. I haven't been able to finish nay of my projects this year. The slimeshooter is less than halfway done, though the pieces are there. The mechanics of the arena are not in place and I still haven't crenellated

the outer wall so it can serve as a platform for snipers. All of these have been balanced by halfway failures like killing Nomar or getting a royal bedroom that you can't sleep in because there's always a bum in it.

I'd like to enjoy my youth now. When the month is over I'll just let anyone else run this hellhole into the ground. They couldn't do as bad a job as me if they tried.

Oh, and the giant one-eyed fire-breathing toad of death got into the fort.

Seriously



What the hell? Does the world hate me?

So I send out the earthen gloves and those other two squads who are around to make the earthen gloves look better. A wrestler engages Uker (the toad) and is immediately incinerated. Well, a least there's no tricks up this one's sleeve. I'm pretty sure I know what fire does.



Oh god I hope I don't know what fire does!

I didn't die of course. A tantrumming macedwarf drew the ire of the beast so I could get away. The macedwarf didn't last long as he was soon engulfed in fire. Our friend Uker then got a chance to show his love to the cripples in the hospital. After the hospital is reduced to a mess of blood and soot. Uker moves to the lower level dining hall where he pursues all except for the suicidal craftsdwarf. Really, you spare that one?



In a fit of awesome that makes the entirety of the victims of Uker look like pathetic miserable worms. A single swordsmaster, Kol Hallshimmered, struck down Uker singlehandedly with his masterful blade. Swordsmaster is an appropriate enough title for a dwarf such as him. I really hope it gets less exciting really soon.



I'm sure that everything will be just fine here in Batlefailed when everyone gets their stuff together.

evrything will be just fine, just fine, just fine, just fine. fine. fine. fine. fine. just fine. just fine. just fine. just fine. just fine. super. super. super fine. just super fine. just fine. super. super-de-duper. fine. just fine.

'Robocorn' Étololon, Prodigy has gone stark raving mad!

TURN 13 - SETH CREIYD

Lur Thiefwitch

Journal of Creiyd Edusil

(date unintelligible) Final Entry

Something is wrong with Cog. Recently she's been espousing the same post-dwarvenist nonsense the late Andreus used to. I think Krimson's death touched her in the head. I'd feel bad for her if I hadn't given up caring.

The alarm has been sounded again. Those bloody goblins are back. Why in Lur's name did I join the military, anyway?

Creiyd was waking up.

His first thought was, "I am dead." This was not a hunch, nor some arcane knowledge missing a cause. He simply felt no life inside of him. Some earlier part of him had fled. Maybe it was stress that was missing, or perhaps blood.

His certainty was helped by what he last remembered (a goblin's pike running him through), but that seemed so long ago now. The existence he'd clung to as a living dwarf was a foreign lamp in the dark distance. Now, a child's excitement was all he knew. Everything before was as a dream.

And what a dream! Before he'd even attempted to digest his surroundings, he was amazed at the inner world he found. The events of his life passed like the flipping pages of a book in the wind. But as he called each image to mind, he realized - with some horror - that he could no longer recognize many of the figures in them. Their identities were slipping away, less distinct from one other than single termites in a log. He started, fearing he might forget his own face.

Did he still have a face? A fast caress assured him that yes, he did - and a beard, too. All the parts seemed there, a fact apparent in his nakedness. This was surprising, to be sure (perhaps even disappointing), but what had he expected? Nothing specific he could recall. He'd tried to speculate before his time, like any mortal must once realizing the irrevocable approach of death. And wondering, in its own sneaky way, can lead to expectation, but what his were, he was not sure. This worried him, as he felt himself slipping away in a manner he could not fathom.

Creiyd then turned his thoughts to the existence of the afterlife (as all mortals do once learning about it) and this rumination arrested him for more minutes than he could count on four limbs.

It was night where he stood, which was in a patch of grassy, rolling hills stretched to the edge of his sight. A distant star, the only one out, glimmered in the sky. The crescent moon floated almost directly above him, and in its bruised ambiance he could see a brilliant patch of white flowers. They shone in the dimness, swaying in the wind, which he accepted as normal until he tried to feel the breeze around him and couldn't. Puzzled, he cautiously approached them and stopped there, kneeling beside the small beauties as they danced in slow circles.

He glanced to the right to be startled by a figure, draped in a magnificent red and white robe, moving toward him in alarming haste. The apparition glided, rather than walked, its hands concealed within the folds of his clothing. Soon the creature drew near enough for Creiyd to see its golden eyes and young, elfin face. "Avast, Creiyd Clearlanterns! Do not pick those flowers, for they are mine to admire! 'Tis I, Lur Thiefwitch, Lor'lady of Jealousy, who moves them thusly!" The being announced this title amidst a fanfare of white smoke, colored lights, and fluttering balls of paper that materialized loudly out of the air before him. His charcoal hair was long and stretched back, blowing in the non-existent breeze, and his eyes were encircled with dark paint that accented his elongated beard and eyelashes.

"Lur?" Creiyd asked, uncertain. "How can I know you aren't a trickster spirit? You may be a foul monster of the abyss!"

The creature smiled. "Laddie, if I were, you'd be dead in a whole new way. But if that's the way you want it?" The air around the two of them began to crackle with the smell of sulfur as shards of lightning passed through the air between them.

"My Lord! Lady!" cried Creiyd, prostrating himself before his god. "I am not worthy to receive you, verily though I wouldst beg to."

"Not at all, my good dwarf," said Lur with a smile that revealed a dazzling set of pointed white teeth. The cracks of lightning ceased, the air grew odorless once more. "I wanted to thank yeh for yer pathetic Temple by granting ye a personal greeting, now that ye made it here."

Not sure how he should feel about this, Creiyd asked, "If I may, Your Resplendence, where exactly is 'here?'"

"Here? Why, this is Limbo, land of the dead! Welcome!"

"Limbo?" Creiyd repeated. "So we Dwarves don't sleep in the stone forever?"

"Heavens no!" Lur exclaimed. "Oh, yeh won't be going there, though."

"What?" said Creiyd.

"Nothing, never mind," Lur said with a wave of his hand. "Come with me, ol' boy, there's someone who wants to see yeh." And then they were flying, only an instant later, it appeared to Creiyd, who felt the urge to vomit uncontrollably as they spiraled through the air at blurry speeds without any seen support or reason.

"Dreams'll often lie to gain their wings," Lur said with such conviction that Creiyd fought his sickness down to pay attention, "to get one foot out the door when the rest cannae fit through. Are yah payin' attention?"

Choking slightly, Creiyd answered, "Yes, m'Lor'lady!"

They flew not for long, but quite far, such that the sun had replaced the moon with enthusiasm by the time they landed. Together, the two dwarf-shaped beings followed a road that lead to a group of many pillars, geometrically arranged and standing tall. By the daylight they cast colossal shadows against the landscape. Creiyd was so awed by the fine pieces of architecture that he almost missed the familiar figure that emerged from behind one of them.

"C-Cog?" he stammered, his senses returning. "What in the Windy World?"

"Creiyd," she greeted him fondly, the musical voice striking a mast somewhere in his mind. Familiar, not yet a memory, but quickly becoming one. A memory is places visited, feelings had, people met and loved; this was something far more haunting.

"But I thought..." Creiyd began.

"...yeh cannae remember anyone from life?" Lur interrupted. "Well, not while they're still alive, no. But once yeh see them in Limbo, the memories come back. Otherwise ye'd miss your loved ones

fiercely ere they died, no?" Lur rubbed his lips, a thoughtful expression crossing his face, and muttered, "There's an idea."

Creiyd caught her eyes with his, with an indecisive weightlessness on the inside, and as he surveyed her loveliness, each second unfolded into an inner battle: where one half of his hardened heart wished to stare in rapture, to hold her forever, while the other, wiser half screamed for caution against... something. Someone. Mercifully for Creiyd, this inner schism took a back seat to the buzzing warmth of seeing her again. Then he realized that all this meant she was dead.

"But you're alive!" Creiyd complained aloud. "I just had a conversation with you before the goblins came! You were..." Creiyd paused. "Not acting yourself..." he trailed off, his thoughts spinning. Cog frowned.

Before long, Lur said, "I believe I can provide some illumination." For a few seconds, the sun grew even brighter in the sky, and Lur laughed boorishly. Then the light faded back to normal, and the god spoke again, his voice growing serious.

"No, listen. A long time ago, in the first year of Battlefailed's founding, before either of you emigrated to that mire, a dwarf by the name of Andreus died unceremoniously within its infant halls. Without getting into details, let's say I owed him a favor, and he ended up getting a free ticket back to the Windy World. Now, before anyone asks, I'm not going to do that for either of you, ever. Sending mortal souls back to the physical plane tends to unravel things."

Creiyd and Cog both appeared confused. Lur sighed. "Look. Ye send a dead dwarf back into the old world, and it causes problems. There's a strict balance at work in the world - one body, one soul, no options. But Andreus went back and didn't think his old body was good enough. He took someone else's, creatin' a mortality deficit that Sahed's gonna kill me for."

"Sahed?" Creiyd whispered to Cog.

"God of Death and Rainbows," Cog whispered back.

Lur raised his hand toward the sky, and out of the ground popped a tree with skull-like knots protruding from the bark, the surface of which rippled like a pond disturbed and peeled away to the sides. Pictures began to form against the now-exposed heartwood of the tree. Creiyd and Cog watched, amazed, as the animated bark formed a lifelike rendition of Andreus sitting crouched in a tomb, painting small sigils on a coffin, with what looked suspiciously like blood.

"Andreus learned a few things in his time here," said Lur with a rueful stare at the sky. "There's a reason the dead are supposed to stay dead."

"Which you ignored," Cog pointed out.

"Guilty!" Lur grinned. "But listen, it gets better. There was a great commotion when one of the hellspawn from this world followed Andreus through the dimensional rift. Since neither of you

fathom what that means for spacetime, I'll just mention that damned souls are now freely passing into and out of your old world, and the universe is falling apart at the seams."

The tree produced sound now, and image after horrifying image of the souls of Battlefailed's dead: some wailing through the halls invisibly, others pounding away futilely at ghostly coffins that yet held them trapped; scenes played of the newly-deceased being hurled across realities against their will, of unspeakable abominations screaming with violence as they ceaselessly raged against a shimmering wall of chromatic flame, smashing themselves upon it; the hellish chorus erupting whenever one broke through and vanished into the other side.

"Let us be clear on one thing," said the God of Jealousy, "Even here, a soul needs a vessel. It doesn't just vanish when its body is stolen. It has to go somewhere. The displaced soul of the first dwarf Andreus commandeered was twisted by the forces beyond the veil, and, well, look."

The tree now showed a hideous, gargantuan turtle, oozing a horrid-looking substance from its every pore as it writhed in seeming agony, moaning as it swam in its own filth. "He used to be such a cute little dwarf," said Lur.

Cog was the first to speak. "It's so horrible," she said.

"Andreus must pay," Creiyd said at last.

"Andreus died a second time," Lur continued, "drowning in the Blueness. This you both know. It was funny for me, after seein' him die of thirst once before. Only this time, he'd preemptively prepared himself for resurrection. He didn't even get to Limbo this time, or I'd have had more than words with him. He just skipped straight across town and took possession of one Cog Racksects, current mayor of Battlefailed - and knowing him, he'll probably perform that ritual again. And every time he does, the hole in reality will widen, 'til the whole mess utterly collapses."

Creiyd glanced over at Cog, who was doing her part to appear outraged. "And then what happens, Your Enviousness?" he asked.

"Then you find out what **fun** really means," Lur said darkly. "But anyway, sweetie, that's why you're here," he finished, gesturing at Cog with a leer.

For a while, no one spoke, until Creiyd asked, "Is that all, Your Feminence?"

"Well, the two o' yeh won' be a couple for long," Lur said, resuming his previous joviality as he chortled, rubbed his hands and peered into the strange tree's shifting display. "A bunch of yer friends are about to arrive."

Seth Frenzygorge, Temporary Overseer Fortress Log, 1st Granite, 511

```
City Nokzamungèg, "Battlefailed"
                                                             1st Granite, 511, Early Spring
                                                     Justice
   Animals
              Kitchen
                         Stone
                                  Stocks
                                            Health
 Created Wealth:
                                                       76
                                   Population:
 You need a broker with
the appraisal skill.
                                   Miners
                                                                                          None
                                                       0
                                                                  Swordsdwarues
                                   Stoneworkers
                                                                                          None
                                                                  Swordmasters
                                                                                          None
                                   Metalsmiths
 Trade Information:
                                    Jewelers
                                                                                          None
 You need a broker with the appraisal skill.
                                                                                          None
                                    Peasants
                                                                                          None
Food Stores:
                                                                  Elite Crssbwmns
Wrestlers
Elite Wrestlers
                  2521
                                                           13
                                                                                          None
                                                                                          None
                                    frained Animals
```

Mayor Cog Racksects has been killed. In the absence of a formal leader (save that self-proclaimed "new mayor") I have assumed command of the outpost.

```
mayor

captain of the guard
militia commander
manager
chief medical dwarf
broker
arsenal dwarf
bookkeeper

The Nobles and Administrators of Nokzamungèg

Seth' Lumasherib, Overseer
CREQUIRE![DEMAND![MANDATE]

REQUIRE![DEMAND][MANDATE]

REQUIRE![DEMAND][MANDATE]

REQUIRE![DEMAND][MANDATE]

REQUIRE![DEMAND][MANDATE]

Kol Cilobabod, Hoardmaster

Kol Cilobabod, Hoardmaster

REQUIRE![DEMAND][MANDATE]

REQUIRE![DEMAND][MANDATE]
```

Battlefailed is in ruins. During the past year we have been assaulted not just by goblins but by what appear to be no less than the denizens of hell itself. A colossal mound of shit that killed half my comrades-in-arms, followed by a vast toad with a terrible fiery breath, that devoured the crippled survivors left in the shit demon's wake. Most of the official records have been destroyed, either in the attacks or in the following riots. I've been checking everyone out to see who's still sane enough to work.

```
'Matuin' Obokibesh has been happy lately. She admired a fine Cage lately. She has witnessed death. She has been satisfied at work lately. She slept in a bedroom like a personal palace recently. She gave somebody food lately. She dined in a legendary dining room recently. She was comforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. She was caught in the rain recently. She gave somebody water lately. She admired own fine Cabinet lately. She was disgusted by a miasma lately.

She is a dubious worshipper of Kigok Pokercooks.

She is a dubious worshipper of Kigok Pokercooks. She is a member of The Oar of Ankles. She is an enemy of Stukuludragis.

She is eighty-six years old, born on the 18th of Galena in the year 424.

She is short and just incredibly fat. Her quite dense hair is somewhat
```

Perhaps sane is the wrong word. Anyone able to smile when the the place is covered in this much gore deserves to have it fixed in place. Still, happy is better than trying to kill me, and judging by the sizable body heap outside my office, I need to take what I can get at this point.

Battlefailed is on emergency lockdown. All work orders have been cancelled. Once the last-minute tasks are completed, the evacuation to Lower Lower Battlefailed will commence. We'll need to forget about anyone too far gone to heed the summons.

We will endure. I don't know how long the tribulations will last, but Battlefailed will succeed. By the gods, we'll become an outpost of bandits if we must.

Conduct Meeting 'Seth' Lumasherib, Overseer



Before the emergency meeting was called, I stationed our new fortress guard inside the meeting hall and kitchens, just in case violence should ruin what I hope will be a productive evening.

Unfortunately, some of the soldiers were waylaid when they found an enraged child savaging a popular Woodworker in Upper Battlefailed. I was told the situation is under control.



I hope they don't hurt the lass. She's just feisty is all.



A murder was committed in the meeting hall before the discussions even began. We are now without our Chief Medical Dwarf. I've assigned a lowly animal dissector to act as a triage nurse until I can find a better replacement.



Meanwhile, only a few yards away, the military put down another one of the crazies.

```
The Hammerdwarf hacks The Crazy in the left upper leg with her -steel battle axe- and the severed part sails off in an arc! The Hammerdwarf hacks The Crazy in the left lower arm with her -steel battle axe- and the severed part sails off in an arc! The Hammerdwarf hacks The Crazy in the upper body with her -steel battle axe-, tearing apart the fat through the x(horse leather cloak)x! The Hammerdwarf hacks The Crazy in the right lower arm with her -steel battle axe- and the severed part sails off in an arc! The Hammerdwarf hacks The Crazy in the right lower leg with her -steel battle axe-, tearing apart the x(giant cave spider silk dress)x! The Hammerdwarf hacks The Crazy in the right upper leg with her -steel battle axe- and the severed part sails off in an arc! The Hammerdwarf hacks The Crazy in the head with her -steel battle axe- and the severed part sails off in an arc!
```

My god... this was a terrible idea. The meeting has adjourned into chaos.

```
the Wood Burner Urvad Athelkurik is fighting!
the Captain Sigun ezumled Orshet Astis is fighting!
the Hammerdwarf Dîshmab Gïnonkadôl is fighting!
the Broker Ral Athelurus is fighting!
the Overseer 'Seth' Lumasherib is fighting!
the Axedwarf Kûbuk Tiristmondûl is fighting!
the Engraver Tulon Orrunmörul is fighting!
the Woodcrafter Doren Keskalthabum is fighting!
the Wrestler Zasit Gósmeroddom is fighting!
the Chief of Medicine Goden Solonarros is fighting!
the Crazy Bëmbul Rigothâl is fighting!
the Woodworker Mörul Tathèrith is fighting!
the Soap Maker onul Emalkûbuk is fighting!
the Dwarven child Asmel Oddomlikot is fighting!
the Weaver Lokum Urdimathel is fighting!
the Carpenter Logem Kikrostdalzat is fighting!
the Dwarven child Obok Kekimkosoth is fighting!
the Recruit Sarvesh Zalisudil is fighting!
the Weaver Tobul Zasurdim is fighting!
```

Yesth' Lumasherib, Overseer has been struck down. WTF
Ral Athelurus, Broker has been struck down.
Etur Kidetcerol, Fishery Worker has been struck down.
Unib Lorbamakath, Tanner has been struck down.
Yelon' Lolorasol, Keeper of Fruitkind has been struck down.
Deduk Uthmikeral, Dwarven Child is throwing a tantrum?
Ezum Nomalonshen Kathililbåd has become a Axedwarf.
Urvad Athelkurik, Wood Burner has suffocated.
Zasit Gósmeroddom, Wrestler cancels Beat Criminal: Invalid officer.
Zasit Gósmeroddom, Wrestler has been struck down.
Tulon Sirabrovod has become a Macedwarf.
Ast Bomrekrimtar, Miner has been struck down.
It has started raining.
Adil Sibrekakath, mayor is throwing a tantrum!
Deduk Uthmikeral, Dwarven Child has calmed down.
Ilral Ducimkeskal, Recruit has been struck down.
Lor Kolokir, Thresher is throwing a tantrum!

Kûbuk Tiristmondûl has been fine lately. He slept in a good bedroom recently. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He has witnessed death. He was comforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. He beat somebody recently. He took joy in slaughter lately.

He is a worshipper of Enshal Dawnfuture.

Enshal Dawnfuture is a deity of The Sword of Boots. Enshal most often takes the form of a dwarf and is associated with fertility.

Three Notable Kills

Goden Flagthrowers the dwarf, d. 511 Tulon Roarpage the dwarf, d. 511 'Seth' Frenzygorge the dwarf, d. 511

One Other Kill

One skeletal groundhog in Battlefailed

He has a good intellect and good intuition, but he has little willpower, a shortage of patience, a meager kinesthetic sense and lousy creativity.

He loves a good thrill. He tends not to openly express emotions. He finds helping others rewarding. He is immodest. He is compassionate. He thinks it is incredibly important to strive for excellence. He often does the first thing that comes to mind. He gnaws on his cheek when he's excited. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather. He is getting used to tragedy.



"Hey guys, check out these white oxen!"

Sethrist Oraclefortress, Expedition Leader's Log, Granite 21, 511

After our long journey, we finally arrived at the place Her Majesty the Bitch told us about. The Blueness of Malodors. It's the ugliest place I have ever been. The shoreline is just a barren rocky slope dipping into a murky sea that smells of turpentine and rotting old sweet pods. Malodors indeed. That confounded liaison will be hearing from me when he gets here.

This place has a horrible reputation. The fortress of Battlefailed (if it even still exists) is supposed to be nearby, but there's no other settlement for miles, so unless we make contact, we're on our own until Autumn. We have a lot of work to do. I've been surveying the land while some of the wrestlers break down the wagon. My cat's run off somewhere, I'm a little worried about her, but to be honest I don't yet see what all the fuss is about. It's just a smelly old beach with a moldy old keep in the distance to the west, and a few roaming white musk oxen near to the south. What in the sunny hells are those things?!

```
Skeletal
Muskox
```

A great skeletal monster charged across the beach toward us, goring Deduk the blacksmith before anyone could react. Several more of the creatures came into view surrounding us as Deduk screamed like an elfwench. While the warriors among us rushed to defend our camp, the rest of us ran for safety to the northern shore.

```
Deduk Udilgigin, Macedwarf
"Deduk Lanternflies"

upper body
lower body
head Winded
right upper arm
left upper arm
right lower arm
left lower arm
right hand
left hand
right upper leg
left upper leg
right lower leg
right foot
left foot
```

The smith bled to death during the fighting.

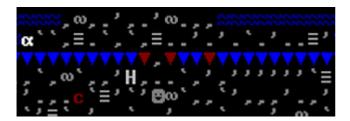


Once the undead muskoxen were finally driven off, another herd of skeletal beasts ambushed our beleaguered guards. The battle was horrible. They make a sound like that of a cave lobster boiling alive, if a thousand times louder and marked by the rattling of bones. They stomped our able-bodied

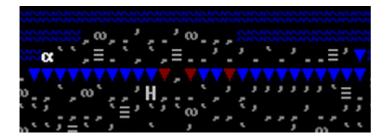
dwarves into whimpering paste before they turned their wrath on the wagon and smashed up all our supplies.



Two kittens bravely stood their ground against a skorse before teaching it what kittens taste like.



Enraged, the peasant woman Adil bore down on one of the brutes without assistance.



That ended predictably.

```
"Adil Gosmeroslan, military "Adil Umbrawinds"

"Adil Umbrawinds"

left lower leg
right foot
left foot
right lung
left lung
heart
guts
liver
stomach
right upper leg
right upper leg
head
right upper arm
left upper arm
left upper arm
left foot
right lower arm
left foot
right lower arm
left foot
left foot
stomach
right true rib
right lower arm
right lower leg
right floating rib
right hand
left lower leg
Very Unhappy
```

I'm not sure how we have survived. Eleven of us were here an hour ago; now four remain: Myself, the Glassmaker, the other Peasant and the Tanner. What the hell was the Queen thinking? A dwarven paradise? Not that I had believed her, but one would think she'd maybe mention the local HORDE OF EVIL before sending us off on our way.

Actually, now that I really think about it, I know exactly what she was thinking. "I hate dwarves and I want them to die."

I've been digging down into the dry cliff away from the evil surface as fast as I can. I wanted to explore the land and find Battlefailed, but that will have to wait. We daren't leave the relative safety of our hideaway and risk drawing the skorses' attentions.

There's no good food or water above ground, so we've got to reach the caverns below, and its fresh water and mushrooms, before we end up looking like our friends outside.

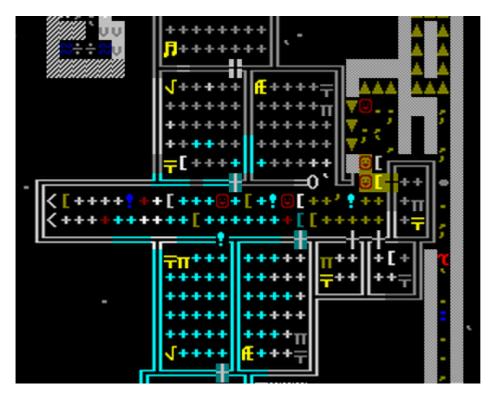
Meanwhile, deep within Battlefailed...

Journal of Creiydrek Yearrings, Overseer and Talented Siege Operator, Excerpts

When the dust finally settled after the Great Berserking, there were only forty-nine of us left. Forty-nine Dwarves, when last year there lived and worked over a hundred. And more than half of 'em killed, not by misfortune or in the defense of our home, but at the hands of their own friends and neighbors. I ask you, journal, what is the point of all our walls and defenses if our greatest enemies are already among us?



The once proud City of Battlefailed has withered into a zoo of horrors soaked with the tears and cruelty of mad dwarves. The shrieking of the tormented throughout can be heard at all hours of day, bouncing through the halls of stone to threaten every ear still lucid enough to be troubled by hearing it. Wherever one goes, one may expect to find old stains of blood or bones whose owners have long been forgotten.



It's glorious.

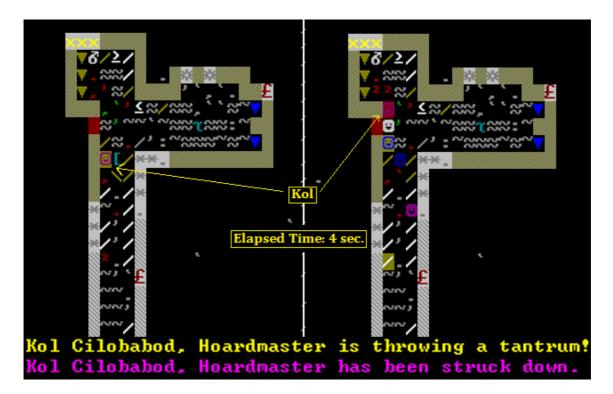
It's perfect, in fact. Where else could a fella like me become Overseer of the entire stinking Fortress? It isn't the spiffiest place, I'll admit that cleanly. In fact, not a single other dwarf wanted the damn job, and who can blame them? Someone's gonna be held responsible for this mess. Any dwarf'll do for now, and I did. I can live like a king while all these screw-ups waste each other. There aren't too many dwarves left to manage, who haven't completely lost their marbles, anyway. I just need to figure out who to keep happy with what excuses and let the good times roll.

Monom Gïnoncog, Metalsmith has gone berserk!

Good news, everyone! Monom's gone apeshit!



Our Captain of the Guard rammed her mace into the metalsmith with such gusto that in the end there was little left of him but some bloody rags and a smear on the floor. Sigun is one dwarf I intend to keep happy.



Instead of updating our stockpile records like I asked him to, our Hoardmaster had been spending his time lying in the entrance hall, throwing silver arrows at passers-by. This did not amuse the guards on patrol duty.

Compared to the carnage of the previous weeks, the first days of my term have been wonderful. If things stay this marvelous I may just have to retire early.

Nearby elsewhere...

```
Doren Keskalthabum, Woodcrafter cancels Store Item in Stockpile: Went insane.

Doren Keskalthabum, Woodcrafter is stricken by melancholy!
Kadol Kübukamem, Glassmaker cancels Construct rock Door: Interrupted by Skeletal Horse.

Announcement Date: 28th Granite, 511
```

[&]quot;Aaaaaaaah!!!"

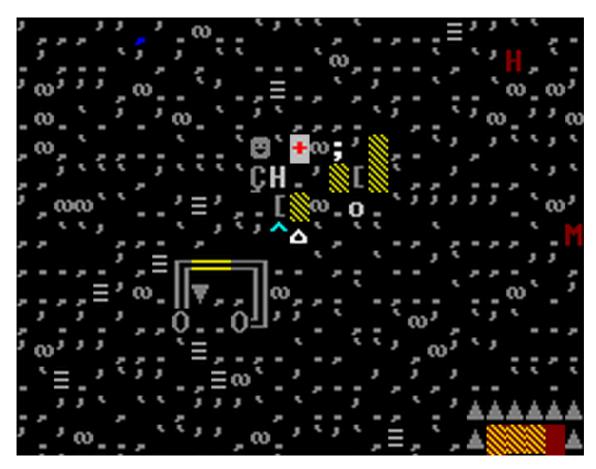
[&]quot;Aiiieeeee!!!"



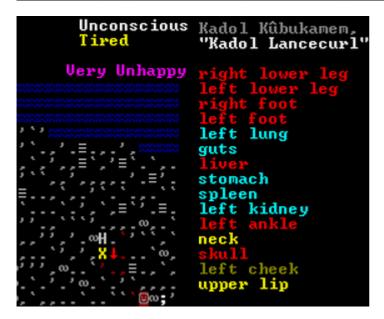
"It's Squirtedfork the Crewed Martyr!"

"Kill it!"

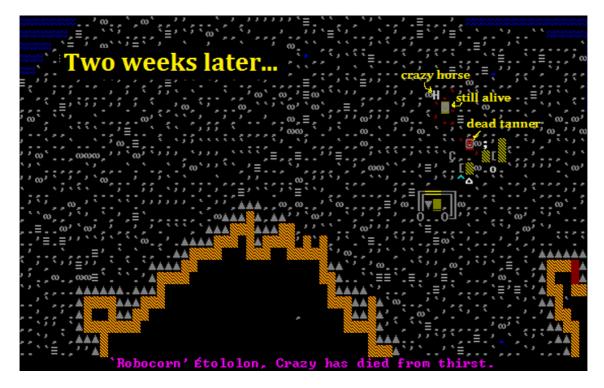




The militia captain punches The Skeletal Horse in the lower body with his left hand, but the attack glances away!
The Skeletal Horse kicks The Recruit in the upper body with her right rear hoof, bruising the muscle and tearing apart the upper spine's nervous tissue through the (giant olm leather cloak)!
The militia captain punches The Skeletal Horse in the upper body with his left hand, but the attack glances away!



"No, Kadol! NOOOO!"



Sethrist Oraclefortress, Expedition Leader's Log, Supplemental

I am now the last living dwarf here. Kadol and the others were slaughtered by a skorse early this morning, while finishing up the doors for the shaft entrance. They'll never be placed now. Since there is nothing left on the surface for me, I am plunging down as deep as I can, in hopes of finding some food and shelter in the caverns below.

Right now I'm trying not to think about anything but digging. I'll keep digging 'til I find something.

```
'Sethrist' Somgeshud, "Sethrist' Oraclefortress", Expedition Leader

'Sethrist' Somgeshud has been quite content lately. He has been satisfied at work lately.

He is a dubious worshipper of Kigok Pokercooks.

He is a citizen of The Sword of Boots. He is a member of The Oar of Ankles.

He is sixty-one years old, born on the 7th of Felsite in the year 449.

His short sideburns are neatly combed. His long moustache is neatly combed. His very long beard is arranged in double braids. His hair is clean-shaven. He is average in size. He has a very narrow round chin. His amethyst eyes have very large irises. His lips are thin. His ears are somewhat short. His nose is broad. His skin is burnt umber.

He is incredibly tough and very slow to tire.

'Sethrist' Somgeshud likes quartzite, black bronze, bone opal, the color mahogany, crossbows, bracelets and catapult parts. He absolutely detests bats.

He has an amazing spatial sense.

He can handle stress. He is trusting. He would rather intimidate others than compromise with them. He doesn't go out of his way to do more work than necessary. He needs alcohol to get through the working day.

A short, sturdy creature fond of drink and industry.
```

Journal of Overseer Creiydrek Yearrings, Excerpts

The first week of Slate has passed without a single death. I'm not sure if I'm ready to thank the gods just yet, but I've taken my hand off my sword hilt for now.



A legendary miner by the name of Matuin has informed me of her decision to carve out a new section of the fort for those of us still aware of reality. I'm not pleased with the autonomy of this plan, but I've made it a rule to give the dwarves with weapons what they want, and I'm not about to tell such an illustrious dwarf what she can't do. As such, she's the only dwarf in the fort beside myself who has sneaked out of corpse removal duties.

Picture this, if you will: I'm walking over to the hospital to visit the wounded when I hear a bloodcurdling howl coming from up the central stair.

Lokum Urdimathel has been very unhappy lately. He enjoyed throwing something recently. He had a fine drink lately. He slept in a very good bedroom recently. He has lost a friend to tragedy recently. He has lost a spouse to tragedy recently. He talked with a child lately. He was irritated at having to give somebody water lately. He was irritated at having to give somebody food lately. He made a friend recently. He was irritated at having to haul somebody to bed lately. He slept without a proper room recently. He was caught in the rain recently. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He choked on smoke underground lately. He has witnessed death. He admired a fine Trade Depot lately. He sustained major injuries recently. He admired own fine Bed lately. He was nauseated by the sun lately.

This anus of a dwarf Lokum has complained so often about having to "drag those miserable sacks to the hospital so they can die there instead of the floor," that I've contemplated throwing him into the Lake of Slime. Generously, I cut his alcohol rations in half instead. I also doubled his work shifts. For some reason, his demeanor failed to improve.

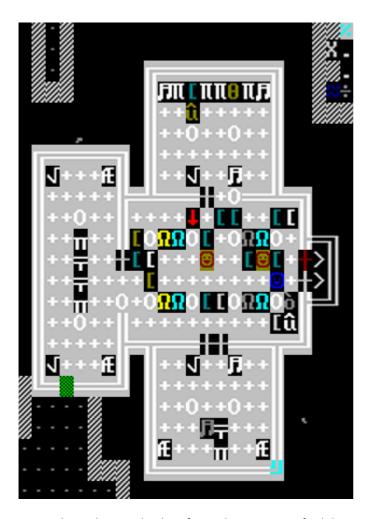
```
Tulon Sirabrovod, broker
"Tulon Warmtharches" Miserable

(copper shield), Right hand
(iron high boot), Right foot
(iron high boot), Left foot
steel mail shirt, Upper body
polar bear leather backpack, Upper body
silver flask, Steel mail shirt
-steel helm-, Head
+steel chain leggings+, Lower body
steel battle axe, Left hand
(steel right gauntlet), Right hand
(steel left gauntlet), Left hand
Edem Rikkirmuthkat's corpse, Hauled
```

Anyways, Tulon, our resident broker-by-day-warrior-by-night, trudges up the stairs carrying the corpse of one of his closest friends slung over his shoulder. With tears in his eyes, he marches purposefully toward the outside world to lay his comrade to rest in the most dignified (undignified) manner possible. Lokum takes one look at him, his expression softening, and he moves toward Tulon, as if to give him a hand...

```
The Weaver punches The broker in the upper body with his left hand, bruising the muscle and bruising the heart through the steel mail shirt! The Weaver punches The broker in the upper body with his right hand, bruising the muscle and bruising the right lung through the steel mail shirt! The Weaver punches The broker in the lower body with his left hand, bruising the muscle and bruising the guts through the *steel chain leggings*! The Weaver punches The broker in the left hand with his left hand, bruising the muscle through the (steel left gauntlet)!
```

...and beats the living daylights out of him.



His outburst leaving his lust for violence unsatisfied, he sprinted to the hospital, where he found a two-month old baby on the floor. He then did what any sensible person does after finding a baby on the hospital floor, and punched it in the face. He punched it in the face. THE FUCKER PUNCHED A BABY IN THE FACE.

```
left lower arm with his -steel
 The Fisherdwarf
                                             hacks The Weaver
                                                                                            in
battle axe- and
The Fisherdwarf
                                            the severed part
hacks The Weaver
                                                                                            sails off
                                                                                           in the right upper leg with his —steel sails off in an arc!
                                                                                                                        in an arc
battle axe- and
The Fisherdwarf
                                            the severed part
hacks The Weaver
                                            hacks The Weaver in the left lower leg with his -steel the severed part sails off in an arc!
battle axe- and
                                            the severed part sails off in an arc!
hacks The Weaver in the left upper arm with his -steel
the severed part sails off in an arc!
hacks The Weaver in the left upper leg with his -steel
the severed part sails off in an arc!
hacks The Weaver in the right lower arm with his -steel
           Fisherdwarf
                  axe- and
           Fisherdwarf
 battle axe— and
The Fisherdwarf
                                            hacks The Weaver in the right lower a
the severed part sails off in an arc
battle axe- and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Fisherdwarf hacks The Weaver in the upper body with his -steel battle
axe-, tearing apart the muscle and tearing apart the right lung through
the X(giant cave swallow leather cloak)X!
The Weaver is having trouble breathing!
The Fisherdwarf hacks The Weaver in the upper body with his -steel battle
axe-, tearing apart the muscle, shattering the right false rib and
tearing apart the left lung through the X(giant cave swallow leather cloak)X!
An artery has been opened by the strike!
A tendon in the right false rib has been torn!
The Weaver is having more trouble breathing!
```

Now that I have seen the depths to which the dwarven soul may plummet, I don't think any barbarousness will surprise me again. Thank the gods that Fisherdwarf what's-her-name was there. Thanks to her, the child lives and there's one less psychopath in the world. I didn't think any dwarf was capable of such an act. By sheer dumb luck the infant managed to come out of the encounter

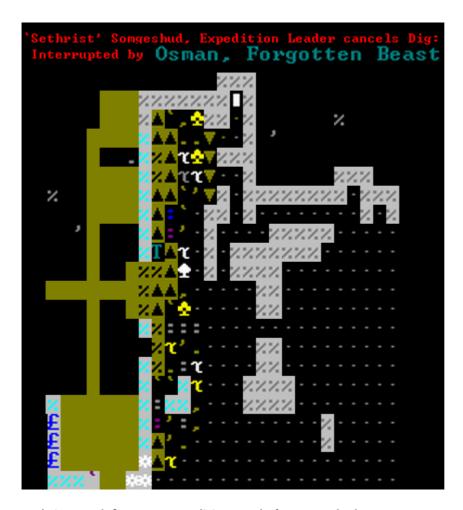
unscathed, but she was covered in so much of her assailant's blood that I believe she'll be traumatized all the same.

```
Ber Osmösptuz, Goblin Hammer Lord
Damsto Xorustosbûb, Goblin Spearman
Stâsost Nakonosost, Goblin Crossbowman Caged
Olngö Omospotsmor, Goblin Crossbowman Caged
Mato Osonuksos, Goblin Axeman
Estrur Ngomsnol, Goblin Axeman
Stâsost Snådstozu, Goblin Axeman
Stâsost Snådstozu, Goblin Axeman
Olngö Zomnabok, Goblin Axeman
Olngö Zomnabok, Goblin Axeman
Asno Ostrasmsmunstu, Goblin Swordsman
Nguslu Ezlazolak, Goblin Swordsman
Nguslu Ezlazolak, Goblin Lasher
Olngö Kutsmobsmusmtä, Goblin Lasher
Olngö Kutsmobsmusmtä, Goblin Lasher
Stozu Ulxakutsmob, Goblin Lasher
Caged Prisoner
Stozu Ulxakutsmob, Goblin Lasher
Caged Prisoner
```

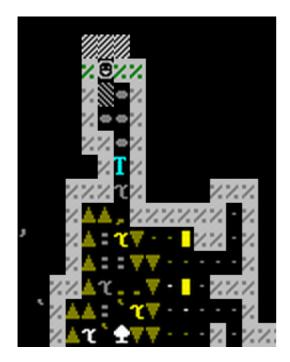
Have I mentioned we have nearly a hundred caged goblins and skeletons at our disposal? What to do with them, I wonder.

Aside from the assault and baby-punching incident, the month is going by very smoothly. I may actually be alive this time next year. It's a remarkable feeling.

Five minutes later...

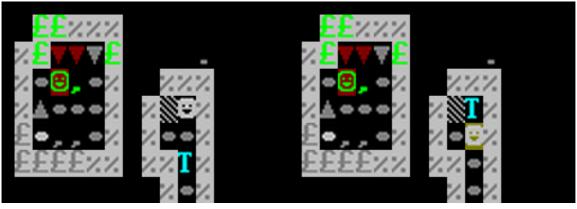


Sethrist Oraclefortress, Expedition Leader's Log, 10th Slate



I've encountered some kind of cave demon. I... I don't think I'll be leaving this place alive.





The Forgotten Beast bites The Expedition Leader in the upper body, tearing the muscle and bruising the liver!

The Forgotten Beast latches on firmly!

The Forgotten Beast bites The Expedition Leader in the head, tearing the muscle and bruising the neck's muscle!

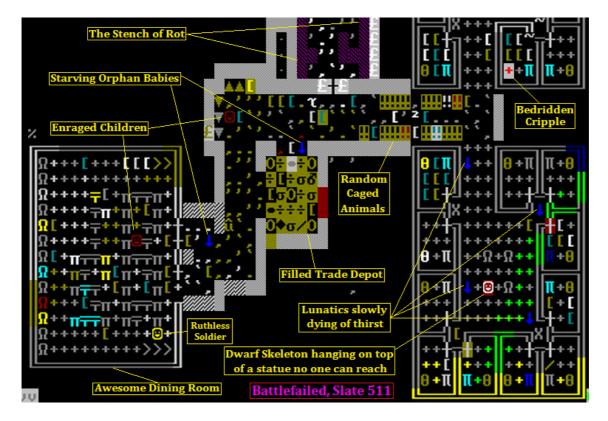
The Forgotten Beast latches on firmly!

The Forgotten Beast shakes The Expedition Leader around by the head!

The head is ripped away and remains in The Forgotten Beast's grip!

'Sethrist' Somgeshud, Expedition Leader has been struck down and he didn't even get a shot in.





Journal of Overseer Creiydrek Yearrings, Excerpts

Slate

Here was the Duty Roster this morning:

- 1 me, overseeing the "fortress."
- 1 legendary miner, digging a new fort section.
- 13 soldiers, doing soldierly things.
- 1 woodworker, refusing to do work.
- 1 terrible doctor, not doing his job.
- 1 legendary mason, disposing of corpses.
- 1 bookkeeper, disposing of corpses.
- 1 bone carver, disposing of corpses.
- 1 blacksmith, disposing of corpses.
- 1 brewer, sleeping.
- 7 children, two of them badly mangled and in comas.
- 4 babies, two of them starving to death, one sitting in the hospital and one being carried by her melancholic mother.
- 5 cripples, wasting our food as they lie in bed, useless.
- 7 mad dwarves, scaring the pants off of us.
- 2 lost souls, endlessly floating in the Accursed Arena. More on them and that later.

We are left with a frighteningly low number capable of performing actual work. This called for some serious reassignment of the schedules. Our mason has been set to work on coffins for our fallen. For my part, I've been carrying food and booze down to the new fort section being carved out. If we need to seal ourselves in there the point will be to survive for a while, not worry about farm operations.

I've cut the ranks of the Fortress Guard down to our five most accomplished axedwarves. They are to spend their free time cleaning up all the corpses and body parts they scattered about the place, an arrangement they've accepted as just. I've had to disband the lofty Earthen Gloves, as they refused to stop training in light of our need for more civilian discipline. Despite this blow to morale, the new squad is excited at the prospect of a fresh beginning and Sigun has chosen a name she hopes will reflect it.

```
1. Sgn èzmld Orsht Asts, Cp
2. èzm Nmlnshn Kthllbåd, Bw
3. Fkd Kgnlsh Dmtdd Egm, Sg
4. Atîs Dodókocîg, Planter
5. Kûbk Trstmndûl Azml Mnm,
```

Most of them received their title after the Great Berserking, during which they each took the lives of at least three dwarves - with the exception of Atis, who only killed two, poor thing.

```
Dîshmab Gïnonkadôl Zugoblûk Tomus

Six Kills

Bëmbul Craftweights the dwarf, d. 511

Ral Ringedfell the dwarf, d. 511

Unib Standardwinters the dwarf, d. 511

Zasit Umbracloistered the dwarf, d. 511

Ast Whipcastles the dwarf, d. 511

Ilral Workshot the dwarf, d. 511
```

Dishmab was relieved from guard duties, her insatiable thirst for blood having earned the scorn of her peers, who refer to her only as "Murderer." I have neglected to point out the hypocrisy at work here.

Meanwhile, I've limited the militia to our Swordsmistress and Zon Ethadadil, who is a legendary swordsdwarf AND stonecrafter. Talented fellow. If we didn't need so many coffins he'd be making toys. The Furnace Operator is now Chief Engineer since we lack for anyone better.

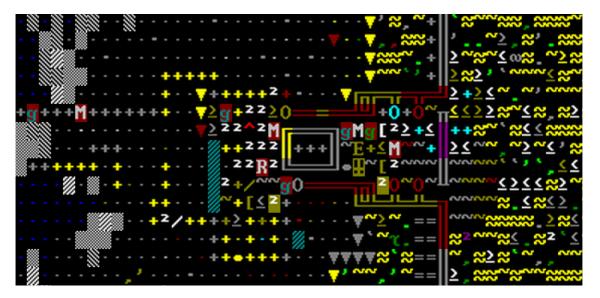
Our Battle-Broker has been elected Battle-Mayor. He met the news with characteristic joy.

```
Tulon Sirabrovod, "Tulon Warmtharches", mayor

Tulon Sirabrovod has been miserable lately. He has lost a friend to tragedy recently. He was nauseated by the sun lately. He was unable to find somebody in charge to cry on lately. He received water recently. He slept in a bedroom like a personal palace recently. He has been tired lately. He has witnessed death. He admired a fine Trade Depot lately. He admired a fine tastefully arranged Statue lately. He was comforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. He admired own fine Cabinet lately. He sustained major injuries recently. He was caught in the rain recently. He was forced to endure the decay of a friend. He was disgusted by a miasma lately.
```

I've made the difficult decision to continue feeding the wounded, but I've assigned just one dwarf to it, one of the former soldiers. The previous doctor has been assigned to hauling duty. In the

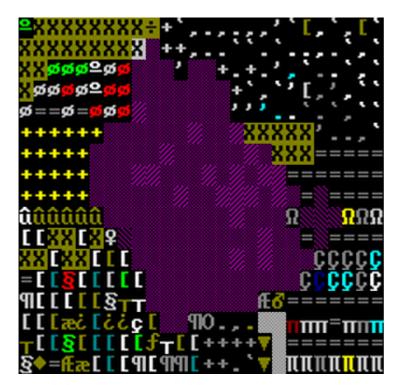
meantime, I resumed production of booze and plump helmets, and have begun reconstruction of the main bridge.



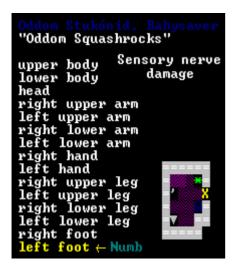
A colossal defensive weapon, the brainchild of our former child prodigy, has had its construction suspended until further notice.



Today I took my weekly trip to the hospital to check on the invalids.



Well, that's beautiful. I love walking downstairs first thing in the morning to smell someone's carnal wreckage oozing all over the floor. These soldiers need to quit polishing their axes and get this shit out of there before I trick them into killing each other.



I had words with the Babysaver Oddom at the top of the stairs. She woke up with a numb foot. It's all very mysterious.

```
Lòr Kolokir, Lost
"Lòr Wheelselder"
                    Soul
lower body
                  Unconscious
head
right upper arm
right lower arm
     lower
 ight hand
   t hand
  ght upper leg
left upper leg
  ght lower leg
left lower leg
  ght foot
     foot
```

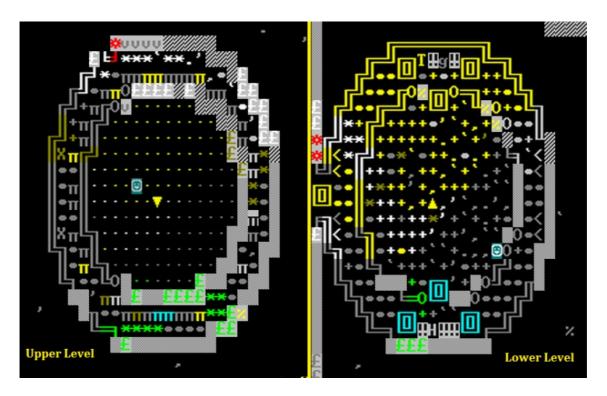
Our wounded are doomed, but they cling to life by a thread. If they die one by one the shock may be dampened a little; then again, maybe shock after shock would be worse. Time will tell.

```
Logem Kikrostdalzat, Crazy is throwing a tantrum?
Meng Tholast, Fake Doctor cancels Suture: Resting injury.
Logem Kikrostdalzat, Crazy has calmed down.
```

As I sat listening to a dying dwarf's final requests, I watched as the new Doctor attempted to suture a patient and got punched in the head for his efforts. I hope he isn't scared away from trying to heal others.



The abusive patient spent the next five minutes screaming at her child before breaking into wretched heaving sobs. Her child looked up at me, as if I could provide her some comfort, or an explanation. I didn't know what to say, so I told her she could help me break down a floor later. I don't think I provided much cheer.



This is the Accursed Arena, which I believe is a portal to hell. No one ever wants to go in there. A mysterious floor collapse back when it was being built trapped two of the unfortunate miners present. To this day they hover there in the air without sound or motion like a pair of floating flesh statues. They don't look alive, but they don't look dead either. Only they know if they're conscious.

I have concocted a plan to free them that will make everyone love me. If a cave-in trapped them the way they are now, then maybe a cave-in will free them. I've called for the necessary mechanics to be set in place. I hope this works, let's hope Otik's got my back on this one.

Otik the Blueness of Flickers is a deity of The Sword of Boots. Otik most often takes the form of a dwarf and is associated with games and the dawn.

17th Slate

I checked in with the workers this afternoon. How's that new wing coming along, Matuin?

'Matuin' Obokibesh, Legendary Miner On Break

Okay. How about you, bookkeeper? Making progress?

Sarvesh Zalisudil, Hoardmaster Store Owned Item

I see. And you, brewer? Are we still running out of booze?

Uvash Lokumamal, Brewer Construct Building

I sigh at these people.

19th Slate

While I was busy thinking up ways to punish our brewer for his incompetence, Tulon the Battle-Mayor rushed up to me with urgent news.

```
A Skeletal Buzzard has stolen ({rat weed [5]})! 19th Slate, 511 A Skeletal Buzzard has stolen ({prickle berries [5]})!
```

Good for the bloody buzzards, I guess they're building nests for the wee ones or something. Oddly enough, they showed no interest in the massive pile of dwarf fragments rotting along the shore.

21st Slate

```
Announcement Date: 21st Slate, 511

Ustuth Uzolsodel, Cripple is stricken by melancholy!
Tulon Sirabrovod, Battle Mayor cancels Eat: Went insane.
Tulon Sirabrovod, Battle Mayor has gone stark raving mad!
```

On the one-month anniversary of my becoming Overseer, the mayor went crazy. At least he no longer suffers, I hope.

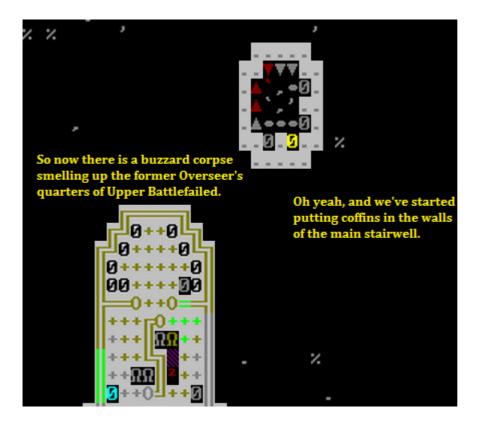
Slate 24

The buzzards attacked in force today. The first of them were spotted flying over the walls by the Fortress Guard, but they flew right past and into the fortress proper.

```
Ast Volalgeshud, Farmer cancels Construct Building: Interrupted by Zombie Buzzard.

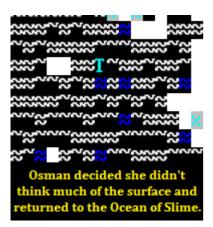
The dwarves suspended the construction of gabbro Coffin.
Inod Bimiklist, Woodworker cancels Pickup Equipment: Interrupted by Zombie Buzzard.
Ast Volalgeshud, Farmer cancels Clean: Interrupted by Zombie Buzzard.
Kol îtonônam, Swordsmistress has grown attached to a steel short sword!
A Zombie Buzzard has stolen ({bloated tubers [5]>>!
Ast Volalgeshud, Farmer cancels Eat: Interrupted by Zombie Buzzard.
Ast Volalgeshud, Farmer cancels Eat: Interrupted by Zombie Buzzard.
Sigun èzumled Orshet Astis has become a captain of the guard.
Ast Volalgeshud, Farmer cancels Eat: Interrupted by Zombie Buzzard.
îton Oddometur, Dwarven Child has calmed down.
Ast Volalgeshud, Farmer cancels Eat: Interrupted by Zombie Buzzard.
A Zombie Buzzard has stolen ({muck roots [5]>>!
shale Statue toppled by Zombie Buzzard. Announcement Date: 24th Slate, 511
```

Soon there were dead buzzards in every corner of Battlefailed, both before and after they stopped moving.



Three melancholics died of thirst last night within minutes of each other. Now at least we have coffins to throw them in. Also, the Woodcrafter took off his clothes in the dining room and hasn't stopped laughing since. Tulon the Crazed Battle-Mayor joined him up on the table. One can only hope Felsite is so tranquil as the last month.

Meanwhile.



Journal of Overseer Creiydrek Yearrings, Excerpts

Felsite

A new mayor was elected, and I took the chance to speak with her today. She's a likable young lass.

```
ushrir Sibrekevon has been ecstatic lately. She talked with a child lately. She slept in a very poor bedroom recently. She admired own fine Cabinet lately. She admired own fine Cabinet lately. She admired of fine Door lately. She gave somebody food lately. She took joy in slaughter lately. She gave somebody water lately. She slept in a good bedroom recently. She was comforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. She has witnessed death. She was caught in the rain recently. She was disgusted by a miasna lately.

She is married to Nomal Shellbusts and has three children: Cerol Oaryell, Likot Glovefortunes and Urist Boatclobbered. She is a worshipper of Ikal Sanctumcradle.

She is a citizen of The Sword of Boots. She is a member of The Oar of Ankles. She is an enemy of The Seductions of Focusing. She is the mayor of The Oar of Ankles. She is an enemy of The Seductions of Focusing. She is the mayor of The Oar of Ankles. She is an enemy of the Seductions of Focusing. She is the mayor of The Oar of Ankles. She is nearly combed. Her somewhat narrow ears are very flattened. Her somewhat broad short nose is incredibly upturned. Her hair is greasy. Her very long hair is neatly combed. Her somewhat narrow ears are very flattened. Her somewhat broad short nose is incredibly upturned. Her bronze eyes are bulging. Her nose bridge is very convex. Her teeth are widely-spaced. Her somewhat tall head is somewhat narrow. She has a narrow square chin. Her slightly sparse eyebrows are slightly low. Her hair is burnt sienna. Her skin is raw umber she is mightly, tough and agile, but she is susceptible to disease.

She his mightly, tough and agile, but she is susceptible to disease.

She his a deep well of patience, a very good sense of empathy, a great memory and a good intellect, but she has an iffy sense for music, a meager ability with social relationships, little villpower and a questionable spatial sense.

She is comfortable in social situations. She prefers familiar routines. She is often cheerful. She has a fertile ima
```

She's a former member of the Earthen Gloves, and she has a taste for giant spider meat, so kudos to her. The only complaint I have is her demand that we switch to ranged weapons. Nobody's using crossbows, I told her, but she was adamant that I provide at least one new quiver to prove that I'm considering the request. There's just no getting through to some folks. At any rate, the talk turned to the state of the fortress (ha!) and her new mayoral accommodations, which will be ready as soon as all the bodies are removed.



Taking a short but well-earned break from my duties, I spent a few hours earlier taking stock of the local artwork. Here are a few of the finer examples.

Govostårem, "The Leafy Thimbles"

Engraved on the wall is a superiorly designed image of iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto the savanna titan by Cog Ledevost. iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the savanna titan iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto in The Plains of Ooze in a time before time.

This beast is pictured all over the fort, for some reason. Whatever this creature did to the world really impressed us.

Omeradur, "The Green Soils"

Engraved on the floor is a finely-designed image of Jokralgis the kobold and Sigun Hamerack the Cremation of Dunes the dwarf by Cog Ledevost. Jokralgis is making a plaintive gesture. Sigun Hamerack the Cremation of Dunes is laughing. The artwork relates to the mortal wounding of the kobold Jokralgis by the dwarf Sigun Hamerack the Cremation of Dunes with a bronze flail in Battlefailed in the late autumn of 506 during The Fifth Attempted Theft at Battlefailed.

Celebrations of Sigun are also common.

≡microcline statue of ûsbu Cursestone≡

This is an exceptional microcline statue of ûsbu Cursestone.
The item is an exceptionally designed image of ûsbu Cursestone the goblin and Sigun Hamerack the Cremation of Dunes the dwarf in microcline by 'Ilmoran' Amtulon. ûsbu Cursestone is making a plaintive gesture. Sigun Hamerack the Cremation of Dunes is striking a menacing pose. The artwork relates to the mortal wounding of the goblin ûsbu Cursestone by the dwarf Sigun Hamerack the Cremation of Dunes with a bronze flail in Battlefailed in the late winter of 506 during The Sixth Attempted Abduction at Battlefailed.

Such items may be the only thing keeping her from snapping, come to think on it.

Most of the engravings and statues around are of mundane events and political seals, and some represent unpleasant things from our past. Usually I see such images as a reminder of dwarven integrity, but if you ask me, that stuff has no business being in the hospital.

+jet statue of Fath Craftedgill+

This is a finely-crafted jet statue of Fath Craftedgill.
The item is a finely-designed image of Fath Craftedgill the dwarf in jet by
Rovod Storlutcatten. Fath Craftedgill is withering away. The artwork relates
to the dehydration of the dwarf Fath Craftedgill in Battlefailed in the
midspring of 503.

gabbro statue of Thîkut Plankdanced

This is a superior quality gabbro statue of Thîkut Plankdanced.
The item is a superiorly designed image of Thîkut Plankdanced the dwarf in gabbro by 'Ilmoran' Amtulon. Thîkut Plankdanced is withering away. The artwork relates to the dehydration of the dwarf Thîkut Plankdanced in Battlefailed in the early spring of 503.

≡microcline statue of Bim Combatglaze≡

This is an exceptional microcline statue of Bim Combatglaze.
The item is an exceptionally designed image of Bim Combatglaze the dwarf in microcline by 'Ilmoran' Amtulon. Bim Combatglaze is withering away. The artwork relates to the dehydration of the dwarf Bim Combatglaze in Battlefailed in the midautumn of 502.

As our comrades died of thirst they got to gaze upon gorgeous statues of dwarves dying of thirst.

The floor engravings are hardly better.

Tangathestrith, "The Trampled Spy" Engraved on the floor is a finely-designed image of Id Oiledfound the dwarf and Realmbasic the horse by Rovod Storlutcatten. Id Oiledfound is making a plaintive gesture. Realmbasic is striking a menacing pose. The artwork relates to the mortal wounding of the dwarf Id Oiledfound by the horse Realmbasic in Battlefailed in the midautumn of 505. Melkorp's Wife

Maskirtunom, "The Equivalent Mortal" Engraved on the floor is a superiorly designed image of Zan Channelskull the dwarf and Riddledbraved the muskox by Cog Ledevost. Zan Channelskull is making a plaintive gesture. Riddledbraved is striking a menacing pose. The artwork relates to the mortal wounding of the dwarf Zan Channelskull by the muskox Riddledbraved in Battlefailed in the midwinter of 504.

I've kept the couple engravers we have from drawing pictures just yet. I mean, we're trying to forget recent events, not commemorate them.



Speaking of the hospital, Babysaver Oddom informed me that the place was once a series of upperclass homes for the local gentry. That certainly explains the opulence. And here I was thinking we cared about our wounded, how silly of me.



In contrast, the former hospital is a blighted, ash-filled mess, destroyed during the rampage of Uker Filthspit just a few months ago. I've turned it into a furniture stockpile.



On my way back from visiting the few wounded who yet lived, I watched one of the psychotic locals walk past me, vomit neatly into a bucket, and walk away without offering so much as a look.

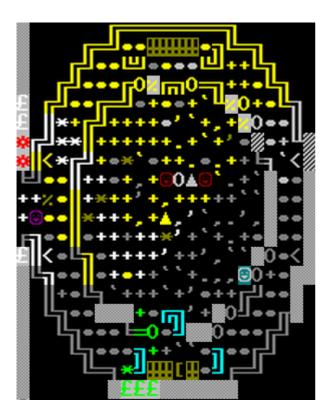
8th Felsite

'Matuin' Obokibesh. Legendary Miner cancels Dig: Hunting vermin for food.

Matuin's been missing for a week now. I hope she's okay.



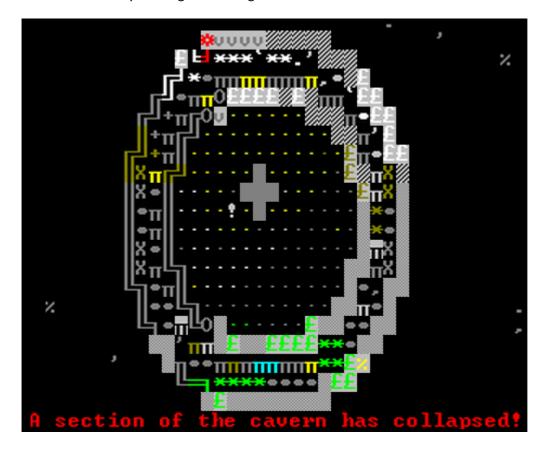
12th Felsite

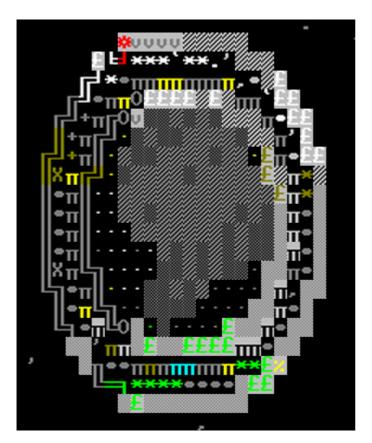


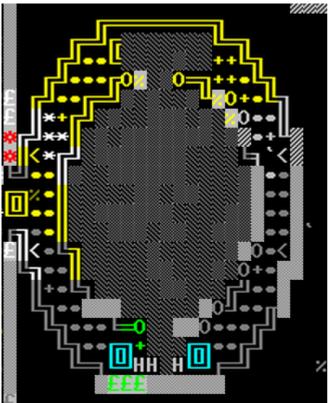
We initiated the plan to free the two trapped miners from the Arena. The first step involves going back inside the place, and no one volunteered for that, so I gently persuaded two children and the idiot bookkeeper. This way, if something goes wrong we won't lose anyone useful.



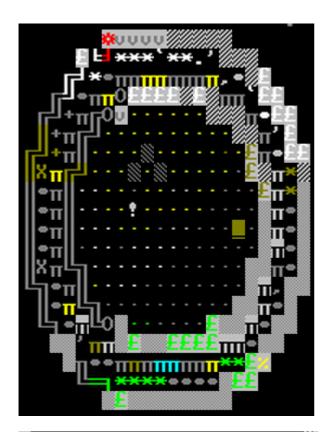
The device is ready. Here goes nothing.

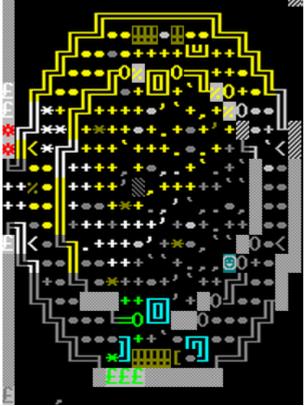






The dust cloud was immense. But did it work?





No.

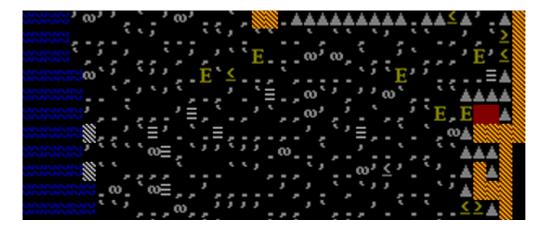
```
Relven caravan from Fisomawada has arrived.
```

One of the lookouts spotted the elven caravan on the horizon. We desperately need their supplies, so for the first time in months, we unlocked the entrance.

While I was visiting her in the absurdly lavish hospital, Kol the Swordsmistress told me in confidence that Kubuk's parents were eaten by elves before his very eyes, back when he was a child. Kol warned me not to let him near the traders during this time of strife. I took heed and told him to perform some basic training maneuvers for the duration of their stay.



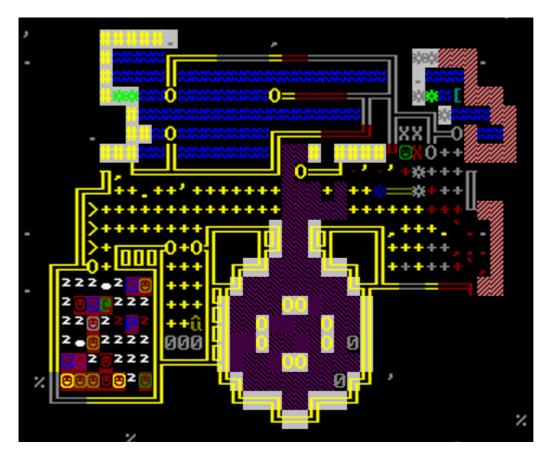
The elves were first greeted by Erib Tomecatch, a mad woodcrafter who ran outside the moment we lowered the gate. After shouting obscenities at our visitors, he screamed away from the fortress in what must be hailed as an act of profound sensibility. I don't expect any grief about locking him out there. As soon as the merchants were in, it was done.



The local unlife showed no interest in either the elves or our momentarily-open gate. It may only be my imagination, but I think they are instinctively scared of us.



The elves entered into an eerily quiet hall in a fortress once teeming with business. They prove to be a shockingly decent bunch when we finally meet them, though for some reason they felt obliged to point out how badly we needed their help. As if I didn't know already, but at least they didn't see the Room of Mephitis or they would have run for the hills like old Erib did.



Their leader Aweme is a delightful lass with the fairest blonde hair I'd ever seen. If she weren't an elf, I would gladly take her to dinner and bed. She told me a flowery tale of a battle her kind fought with goblins over four hundred years ago. It was really quite fascinating. After an hour or so of such pleasantries, I managed to trade off some of our extra mechanisms for a respectable quantity of food, booze, and wood. This has been a fine day for Dwarf-Elf relations.

A medium-sized creature dedicated to the ruthless protection of nature.

Her hair is extremely long. She has a small build but is very fat. Her quite long nose is sharply hooked. Her close-set pine green eyes are deeply sunken. Her small-lobed ears are somewhat narrow. Her head is somewhat broad. She has a scratchy voice. Her eyebrows are short. Her lips are thin. Her nose bridge is convex. Her hair is golden yellow. Her skin is brown.

NO KUBUK DON'T

The Axedwarf hacks The Elf Merchant in the lower body with his -steel battle axe- and the severed part sails off in an arc!

Well, dinner's now out of the question.



As the children and I looked on in horror, Kubuk stormed into the Trade Depot brandishing his axe and bisected every last elf in sight, providing our Trade Depot with a muddy red coat of fresh paint. By an amazing stroke of luck, this appears to have been a momentary lapse of reason in lieu of a permanent one. He trudged off silently after it was all over, and once the initial shock wore off, I told the Peasant nearby to take the elf bits outside and start butchering the warthogs. Everything else in the caravan is ours now. As if we had a use for a dozen wooden swords.

Oh, good, the mayor's approaching. Pray thee, lass, what new horrors await my ears?

Kol îtonônam, Swordsmistress has died from thirst.

She's dead?! I just spoke to her a few days ago! She only went in there for a fractured rib! All Meng had to do was bring her some water and the Slayer of Uker would still be alive! The fact that she was beautiful has everything to do with my outrage!

It's not like we don't have any damn water!

Meng Tomêmoslan, Furnace Operator Fill Waterskin

What in the nineteen hells is more important to him than taking care of his patients!?

Meng Tholast, Fake Doctor Eat

You son of a bitch.

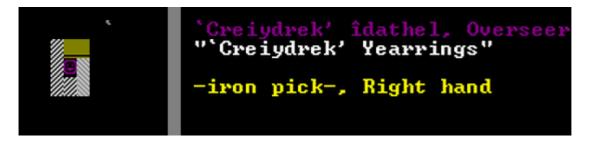
25th Felsite

No one has seen Matuin the entire month. I'm heading to the stock room to drop off a shield, so while I'm there I think I'll grab a pick and go down to the new wing she's been digging to find out if she's still alive.



This seems like a good time to mention that I've been completely naked since the beginning of the week. Well, not completely naked, mind you. I need the boot so my foot won't fall off! Ha-hee-hee-haw!

Anyways the boot fell off, so I dug most nudely toward Matuin's last known whereabouts.



At least, I did for a while.



Digging is hard! I told the ex-soldier Fikod Boatscarnage to finish for me. He was just hauling trash around anyway.

```
Fikod Koganilush Dumatedod Egom, Hauler
"Fikod Boatscarnage the Rough Boredom of Nature"

\[ \left( \text{E} \right( \text{F} + \tex
```

I won't even comment on the poetic genius of his title. He went down with the pick in my stead, giving me a reproachful look as he left. What? I'm not the only one trying life without clothes. At least I can still speak proper Dwarvish, unlike some of the other specimens.

In the past month many of the insane dwarves and half of the wounded have died. Three infants perished as well, all of 'em from of lack of drink. I dunno why nobody fed them. I guess we each thought someone else was doing it. There are only thirty-four of us left now. On the bright side of it, a delicious cat has become a stray.

```
Cog Sibrekbungek, Stray Cat
"Cog Salvelizards"

This animal isn't interested
in your wishes.

S: Ready for Slaughter (Y)
```

To end the month on a happy note for a change, Fikod discovered Matuin was hunting rats for food, half-starved to death, but alive all the same. Turns out she mined away the original entryway, and by the time she realized her mistake she was too weak from hunger to lift her pick and carve a new way out. Right. Whatever her reasoning, I think we're all glad she is safe.

'Matuin' Obokibesh, Legendary Miner Drink

Poor lass has gone off to get a drink now. With her disappearance off my mind, I can rest easier and concentrate on preparing the new area for habitation. Things are looking up now.

```
Meng Tholast, Fake Doctor cancels Diagnose Patient: Resting injury.
```

Our doctor sickens me.

```
'Matuin' Obokibesh, Legendary Miner cancels Drink: Went insane. 'Matuin' Obokibesh, Legendary Miner is stricken by melancholy!
```

Hematite



It's so hot and sticky that all the other dwarves have begun to copy my recent uptake of nudism.

```
èzum Nomalonshen Kathililbåd,
"èzum Staffchants the Wet Gui
(-steel pick-), Right hand
iron pick, Left hand
smear of Monom Sternboot's dwa
smear of Monom Sternboot's dwa
```

Correction, almost all of them. The soldiers refuse to be defenseless, even though they're off-duty.

```
Sigun ezumled Orshet Astis, Captain
"Sigun Hamerack the Cremation of Dunes"

+steel mail shirt+, Upper body
(+«+grizzly bear leather backpack+»+), Upper body
flask, +steel mail shirt+
=steel right gauntlet=, Right hand
*steel high boot*, Right foot
*steel high boot*, Left foot
*steel helm*, Head
=steel chain leggings=, Lower body
+bronze shield+, Left hand
*steel battle axe*, Right hand
```

I'm not normally one for immodesty but my definition of normal has been so far stretched that it's cracked and splintered beneath the weight of this horrible fetid ocean we can't even swim in because

we'd rather be hot and sticky and naked than wade in that filth, not that any of us are good swimmers anyway and I think I'm starting to ramble so I'm going to lay down for a while before I totally lose myself.

2nd Hematite

Feeling a bit better today. I still dread waking, but at least I'm thirsty for booze again.

```
the Battle Mayor Tulon Sirabrovod is fighting! the Dwarven child Edzul Dodókducim is fighting!
```

Right before lunch I saw a fight break out in the dining hall. I didn't even know Tulon was still alive.

```
Edzul Dodókducim, "Edzul Claspworked", Dwarven Child Menace
                                                                       lately. She cho
ne Well lately.
She e
                                                        unhappy la
a very fine
                   ducim has be recently. She
                                      been
                                            n very
admired
          ecently. She talked with somebody ing recently. She yelled at somebody is better afterward. She has lost a sibling better afterward, she recently. She sle
                                                                                             lately
                                                                                   tragedy recently.
                                ard. o.
tragedy reco
t a father
lost
                                                                       slept
                                                           tragedy recently.
mother to tragedy
                                                                            ecently. She slept
tragedy recently. S
                                                       to
                     ecently. She
lately. She
                                       e has lost a mo
admired a fine
                                                                 tastefully arranged Trap
                                                                                                          latelu
                   to endure
                                                                                         disgusted
                           witnessed
                                                             was comforted by
      cage recently.
                                                                                       somewhat narrow
l. Her somewhat
                                                             of Limestone
                                  Her hair is clean-shaven. Her
Her nose is extraordinarily broa
             corpulent.
       somewhat
                           slightly sunken. Her lips
                                                                      are slightly thick.
ochre eyes
                                                         is often experi
and natural beauty
She strive
                              demeanor. She doesn't often experience strong assertive. She is often cheerful. She has a
             . She is assertive. She
ion. She appreciates art
in dealings with others.
                                                                                erful. She
beauty. She
                                                                                                     has a fert
is candid
                                                 art
                                                                                        excellence. She
            to get through the working day. She does not mind being outdoors,
```

Yes, it seems that two years old is old enough to both comprehend the deaths of your parents *and* identify the nearest defenseless psychotic to take it out on. Bravo, little Edzul. She'll make a fine warrior if she lives long enough to grow up. Incidentally, her father happens to be the late babypuncher.

```
"Sigun Hamerack the Cremation

+steel mail shirt+, Upper bod

(+«+grizzly bear leather back
flask, +steel mail shirt+

=steel right gauntlet=, Right

*steel high boot*, Right foot

*steel high boot*, Left foot

*steel helm*, Head

=steel chain leggings=, Lower

+bronze shield+, Left hand

*steel battle axe*, Right han
Rhesus Macaque skull, Hauled
```

Fortunately for her, Sigun is too busy hauling monkey bones to kill children.

3rd Hematite

This evening we found Matuin dead and withered about forty feet away from the booze stockpile. Where is the justice?

'Matuin' Obokibesh, Crazy Legendary Miner has died from thirst.

6th Hematite

I worry that I'm losing my mind. My thoughts keep turning to very dark corners, especially those for the doctor Meng. I catch myself dreaming up ways to torment him. I decided to take a walk through Upper Battlefailed to clear my head. What was I thinking?



I noticed, during my trip, that an outrageously ornate tomb had been built for our late child prodigy. While such waste of space may have been permissible during Battlefailed's better days (oh gods how I miss them), recent events have forced on us a more practical approach. I have no qualms about the child keeping his burial chamber, but it needs to be designated for more coffins.

```
Edzul Dodókducim, Dwarven Child Menace has calmed down.

It has started raining.

Edzul Dodókducim, Child Menace is throwing a tantrum!

Edzul Dodókducim, Child Menace cancels Harvest Plants: Throwing tantrum.
```

```
The Child Menace punches The Crazy in the lower body with her left hand, bruising the muscle!
The Child Menace punches The Crazy in the left lower leg with her right hand, bruising the muscle!
The Child Menace punches The Crazy in the upper body with her left hand, bruising the muscle and bruising the liver!
The Child Menace punches The Crazy in the left upper arm with her right hand, bruising the muscle!
```

After being caught in a rainstorm, Edzul threw a tantrum and started battering another one of the mindless dwarves. She's quite strong for a toddler, but I really hope she calms down. I can't protect her from Sigun if she starts beating down on the sane ones.

```
Etur Kidetcerol, Fishery Worker
Lokum Urdimathel, Weaver
iton Oddometur, Dwarven Child
Mafol Akruluzar, Dwarven Baby
Ikal Ottemarban
Monom Rithkegeth, Cripple

Mother
Father
Younger Brother
Younger Sister
Deity
Friend
```

Her entire family is dead except for her comatose brother, the poor dear. I think I'll take her under my wing. The lass needs guidance, maybe a puppy, and perhaps a new bedroom with some groundhog cages. What little 'un doesn't like groundhogs?

```
hrir Sibrekevon, Mayor
"ùshrir Salvelover"
upper body
lower body
head
right upper arm
left upper arm right lower arm Numb
left lower arm
right hand
left hand
right upper leg
left upper leg
right lower leg
left lower leg
right foot
left foot
          Status
    No health problems
         ?????????
```

I went to the mayor to discuss the adoption procedures, but she was incensed about her 'numbness' (that's all she would say) and was hurrying off to the hospital to get checked at. Yes, Mayor, I'm certain the good doctor will be able to assist you.

Meng Tholast, Fake Doctor

Store Item in Stockpile

Just let me know when you're ready to punch him and I'll hold him down for you.

9th Hematite

I have discovered the source of the smell coming from the northern room in the main hall.



Someone has placed several undead animals in this otherwise empty room for some purpose I cannot imagine. If they were trying to set a trap for the caravans, they chose a rather oblong approach.

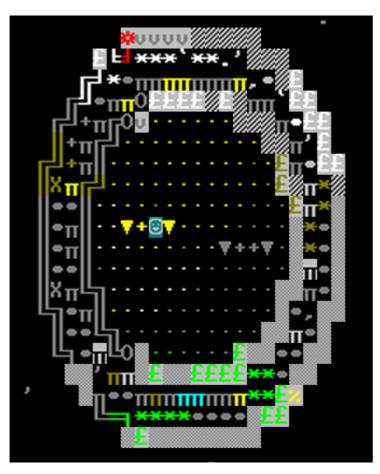
Our butcher has assumed a colorful new title and identity. He can call himself whatever he likes, but he's still just a butcher.

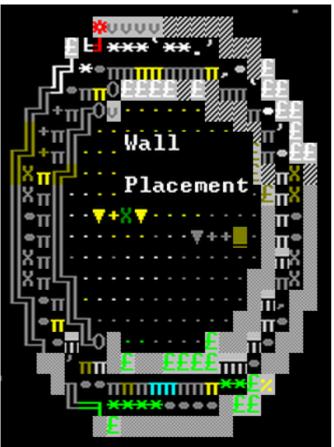
```
ushrir Sibrekevon, Mayor
"ushrir Salvelover"

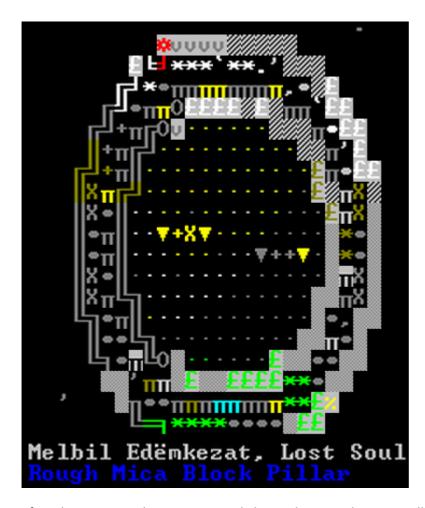
upper body
lower body
head
right upper arm
left upper arm
right lower arm Numb
left lower arm
right hand
left hand
right upper leg
left upper leg
left lower leg
left lower leg
left foot
```

In the meantime, our horrified mayor's condition worsens. To my astonishment, the doctor has not had a chance to check in with her. I'm unsure why I keep calling him a doctor.

13th Hematite







I fear the miners in the Arena are truly beyond our reach, temporally speaking. The one higher in the air is occupying the same space as a solid pillar in a clear violation of all known physics. Perhaps they are ghosts, trapped between worlds, or something worse. Whatever the case, I've gone back to the drawing board.



Regarding the arena, there are six levers by the front door and nobody knows what they do. I've resisted the temptation to determine their function as I'm convinced one of them opens the monster cages I mentioned earlier.

Tulon the former Battle Mayor has starved to death. He's the first person to die from something other than thirst in recent memory so I've decided to throw a party in the dining room tomorrow. Otik knows we need the morale boost.

14th Hematite

Oh, come on, guys...



Really? The Elf corpses were never removed from the Depot? They were just shoved under the loading platform and now the entire hall smells worse than the Blueness itself? When I find that peasant I'm going to throttle him.

You know what? I don't care. The party's on.

16th Hematite

```
Ustuth Uzolsodel, Crazy has died from thirst.
ùshrir Sibrekevon, Mayor cancels Dig: Resting injury.
shale Table destroyed by Edzul Dodókducim, Child Menace.
You have struck cryolite! 17th Hematite, 511
ùshrir Sibrekevon, Mayor's mandate has ended.

Ithas?
```

```
Twobeard'
                                                                   Rigòthbelal,
                                                   beard
In èzumled or
Ethadadil Berkàs na
Ethadadil Berkàs na
Ethadadil Overseer
Ethadadil Tugoblûk To[REQUI
Hoardmaster[REQUI
Ter[REQUI
                                                                                        Astis, Ca<mark>lREQUIREI</mark>LDEMAND
Kälán, milREQUIREILDEMAND
Overseer [REQUIREILDEMAND
     tain of the guard
  litia commander
                                               n Ethauauii berm
reiydrek' îdathe
ng Tholast, Fake
ishmab Gïnonkadôl
rvesh Zalìsudil,
rvesh Zalìsudil,
hief medical dwarf
proker
                                                                                    Hoardmaster[REQUIRE][DEMAND]
Hoardmaster[REQUIRE][DEMAND]
arsenal dwarf
ookkeeper
                                                                                                   Lege[REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDA
ik To[REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDA
                                                                                   , Crazy Le
Zugoblûk
                                                              Obokibesh,
     itia captain
          ia captain
                                                shmab Gïnonkadôl
```

Turns out I won't have to make that quiver I was never going to make. In an upset victory, Twobeard has been elected mayor of the fort. I guess that change of identity served him well. Understandably, it's so hard to stand out when you share a first name with the badaxe Captain of the Guard:

```
Sigun èzumled Orshet Astis, "Sigun Hamerack the Cremation of Dunes", Captain Sigun èzumled Orshet Astis has been quite content lately. She took joy in slaughter lately. She slept in a good bedroom recently. She was nauseated by the sun lately. She has witnessed death. She was conforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. She was caught in the rain recently. She admired own fine Bed lately. She was disgusted by a miasma lately. Whowasn't? She is an ardent worshipper of Avuz Silverycopper.

She is an ardent worshipper of Avuz Silverycopper.

She is seventy-nine years old, born on the 24th of Sandstone in the year 431.

Her hair is incredibly straight. Her very long hair is arranged in double braids. She is muscular. Her teeth are widely-spaced. She has a low, clear voice. Her somewhat narrow ears are somewhat tall. Her somewhat high eyebrows are quite dense. Her brass eyes are close-set. Her lips are slightly thick. Her hair is chestnut. Her dark peach skin is slightly wrinkled.

She is very agile, very slow to tire and strong, but she is quite susceptible to disease and shockingly fragile. Shei?

Sigun èzumled Orshet Astis likes periclase, native aluminum, yellow spessartine, the color lavender blush and dogs for their loyalty. When possible, she prefers to consume sewer brew. She absolutely detests bats. She has a great kinesthetic sense, but she has an iffy sense for music, meager creativity, very bad analytical abilities, very bad intuition, a really had memory and next to no willpower.

She likes to try new things. She is trusting. She is very confident. She is organized. She has a sense of duty. She often greets others with a hug. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She does not mind being outdoors, at least for a time. She doesn't really care about anything anymore.
```

Oh my good gods



I strictly forbade Cerol from playing in the corpse pile ever again.

19 Hematite

I have personally determined the cause of the mysterious outbreak of numbness.

forgotten beast frozen extract dusting (right foot)

I suppose we deserve it for walking around barefoot everywhere, but who in their right mind leaves a pile of numbing dust in a pathway for someone else in their right mind to step in? Who indeed. I got better, no thanks to the redoubtable doctor.

20th Hematite

Erib Melbilåkum, Crazy has died from thirst.

One of the lookouts saw Erib drop dead outside our gate, so we opened it to retrieve his body and Kubuk added another monster to his kill record.

```
The Kills of Kûbuk Tiristmondûl Azmol Monom

Eleven Notable Kills

Goden Flagthrowers the dwarf, d. 511
Tulon Roarpage the dwarf, d. 511
'Seth' Frenzygorge the dwarf, d. 511
Etur Talonlens the dwarf, d. 511
'Melon' Letterseized the dwarf, d. 511
Aweme Jawshot the elf, d. 511
Taviti Earthnatures the elf, d. 511
Caraca Earthenlabored the elf, d. 511
the mule, d. 511
the warthog, d. 511
Calovi Clinchedseeds the elf, d. 511

Two Other Kills

One skeletal groundhog in Battlefailed
One zombie buzzard in Battlefailed
```

23rd Hematite

All but two of the wounded and all of the mad dwarves have perished. We are down to twenty-nine, and the halls are quieter than ever. Okit knows if we don't have something to be happy about there soon won't be anyone left with their senses so my plan for the coming month is to address everyone's personal requests and see if we can't hold out until help arrives. Either that, or we'll have our final days as pleasant as possible.

The fortress attracted no migrants this season.

Malachite

As tradition dictates, I met with the new mayor on the first of the new month.

```
His sideburns are clean-shaven. His very long moustache is arranged in double braids. His medium-length beard is arranged in double braids. His very long hair is arranged in double braids. He is weak. He has a fairly deep and raspy voice. His ears are very splayed out. He has very high cheekbones, and he has a broad chin. His narrow bronze eyes are protruding. His slightly upturned nose is narrow. His skin is copper. His lower body bears a massive straight scar.

He is rarely sick, but he is quick to tire, very weak and remarkably flimsy.

Twobeard' Rigothbelal likes galena, adamantine, amethyst, green glass, rope reed fiber fabric, spears, mail shirts, traction benches and dogs for their loyalty. When possible, he prefers to consume tuber beer and cow's milk. He has a very good sense of the position of his own body and a good feel sense, very bad intuition, quite poor focus, very bad analytical abilities and next to no empathy.

He is often nervous. He is very friendly. He loves a good thrill. He has a great awareness of his own emotions. He is guarded in relationships with others. He is very willing to compare himself favorably with others. He exhales sharply when he becomes exasperated. He becomes very rigid when he's angry. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He does not mind being outdoors, at least for a time. He is a hardened individual.

Mandates: Export of spears Prohibited
```

Yes, mister Mayor, I think we can manage that one.

4th Malachite

Two days ago I was taking a trip through Upper Battlefailed to check up on Edzul, when I came across an unsettling coffin with some very queer etchings.



It had stars and crescents and circles and whatnot, but there were eyes and letters both foreign and rote; and what looked to be dried blood set in the depressions. It was just strange. I can't tell if I'd rather put it in my new room or dump it in the magma sea. I think I'll leave it there for now.

Ah, yes, my new room. For the sake of my mental health I have moved into some very nice open quarters.



It's quite comfortable here. The clothes of a former occupant lie scattered across the floor, and I've been using them to wipe my feet clean every night.

(giant cave spider silk sock)

Weight: (1
Owner: 'Robocorn II' Étololon, Child Prodigy

Contents:

forgotten beast frozen extract coating

A couple of similar rooms have been dug out nearby and will be adorned with the finest luxuries we can provide. We have the wealth, and it's worth more to us now if enjoyed and not hoarded.

```
Lòr Kolokir, Cripple is throwing a tantrum!
Lòr Kolokir, Cripple has calmed down.
Lòr Kolokir, Cripple is throwing a tantrum!
Lòr Kolokir, Cripple has died from thirst.
```

Meng has been fired.

chief medical dwarf ùshrir Sibrekevon, Bone Carver

A wounded dwarf who's struggled for breath the last fifteen weeks finally passed away. He threw a bucket at the doctor's head just before moving on, earning himself a glorious tomb I'll build when things settle down in the future.

In light of the doctor's consistent ineptitude, the previous mayor has been selected as our new physician. It's about damn time. She is highly untrained but at least she's reliable. I went to the hospital to give Meng the good news myself, but as luck would have it, he wasn't there.

```
"Meng Deepsabres"

XX(blind cave bear leather left mitten)XX, Hauled
```

I wish he'd just die already.

8th Malachite

This afternoon I met with some of the workers, trying see if I can provide anything to make their lives just that much easier. Like most days, this one ended with a splitting headache and the need to drink more beer than the night before.

Fikod Koganilush Dumatedod Egom has become a Miner.

Fikod is becoming confrontational with me, the person who saved him from a dead-end job as a Siege Engineer. Take it from an expert, that boy was going nowhere in a hurry. He's not even that great of a miner.

Either some hope to emulate the success of Twobeard by redefining themselves, or there is a new form of madness looming over us. I've read once that a common human reaction to stress is to alter one's personality into one more suited to its circumstances. This is not common for dwarves, as the state of our home indicates. Zan zodost geshud Nokzamungèg.

First was the peasant woman, who accosted me and said she would no longer bear my tyranny, and declared she was signing up with Ilmoran to learn masonry. "Whatever," I told her exactly.

```
Daetrin' Lokumamal, "'Daetrin' Speartaught", Apprentice Mason
'Daetrin' Lokumamal likes chromite, adamantine, light yellow diamond,
green glass, pig tail fiber fabric and circles. She absolutely detests rats.
```

She was followed by the planter, who now goes by the name "Lucus Casius." She had some interesting requests.

```
Lucus Casius' Dodókocîg, "Lucus Casius' Claspeddell", Planter likes chameleon fiends for their rhythmic undulations.
```

The next day, the Babysaver introduced herself as "Oglokoog" and said she is now a male and a miner by trade. She probably got the name from one of the two coffins bearing it. The new projects could certainly use the assistance, so I've given her my blessing. We certainly have enough picks to go around.

"`Oglokoog' Squashrocks" Mining		
powder	327	588
drinks	135	1034
leaves	None	
liquid	544	477
glob	403	
seeds	1377	647
weapons	211	152
ammunition	246	2587
armor	562	863
legwear	344	549
headwear	363	626
handwear	635	832
footwear	689	1009

Finally, we have the brewer, who answers to "Nightmarebros" (night-mare-bros); who just had to put her clothes back on and make everyone feel uncomfortable.

```
"Nightmarebros' Whitenessfortresses"

X(draltha leather trousers)X, Lower body
X(pig tail fiber dress)X, Upper body
X(warthog leather coat)X, Upper body
X(giant cave spider silk cloak)X, Upper body
X(giant cave spider silk cap)X, Head
X(horse leather hood)X, Head
X(cat leather left glove)X, Left hand
X(cave spider silk left mitten)X, Left hand
X(cave spider silk right mitten)X, Right hand
X(cave spider silk right mitten)X, Right hand
X(cave spider silk sock)X, Left foot
X(pig tail fiber shoe)X, Left foot
X(pig tail fiber shoe)X, Right foot
X(pig tail fiber shoe)X, Right foot
```

10th Malachite

Browsing the fortress records, I was impressed by Zon's list of accomplishments.

The Kills of Zon Ethadadil Berkàs Kälán

Twenty-Three Notable Kills

Båx Dreadfulgross the goblin, d. 507 Zolak Ownsteal the goblin, d. 507 the troll, d. 508 Ozud Tormentdented the goblin, d. 509 Ago Hellfats the goblin, d. 509 Atu Scorpionbud the goblin, d. 509 Arstruk Weaverterror the goblin, d. 509 Nguslu Fiendfroth the goblin, d. Stâsost Nourisheddread the goblin, d. 509 Scourgecackled the troll, d. 509 Osnun Pageplagues the goblin, d. 509 Zom Hairyfly the goblin, d. Tode Wraithshut the goblin, Ngebzo Demoncrawl the goblin, d. 510 Asno Carriedmenaced the goblin, d. 510 Snodub Malignedtraps the goblin, Frurus the kobold, d. 510 Smunstu Malicebinds the goblin, d. 510 Snang Matchedtorments the goblin, d. 510 Utes Cunningthieves the goblin, d. 510 Utes Bounddread the goblin, d. 510 Atir Relicguard the dwarf, d. îton Attackgalley the dwarf, d. 510

Thirteen Other Kills

A few entries of my own were added, such as a note to all future overseers never to let Kubuk near the elves again. He and I had an actual conversation several hours ago, the first one we've had since the elves were massacred. He told me the elves had it coming, and that he is an enemy of the Veiled Beans, and will always be their enemy, and that whenever they come here he will attempt to injure them. That is, if the elves ever come back again, but why shouldn't they? These were not the first elves to fall at Battlefailed.

```
Covema Imiwamocuri, Elf Merchant
Ineth ònulisan, Merchant
Momuz Bâsenkadol, Merchant
Lesana Aÿaralafó, Elf Merchant
Lesana Nitheale, Elf Merchant
Elana Fifíconibo, Elf Merchant
Romimi Amuèna, Elf Merchant
Alatha Thithutofì, Elf Merchant
Vera Ateraamo, Elf Merchant
Aye Amenamithu, Elf Merchant

Iulo Nuramithemiyi, Elf Merchant
Ruÿava Yararethiwa, Elf Merchant
Ririli Alietéwe, Elf Merchant
Caraca Sabaequa, Elf Merchant
Taviti Sabaamala, Elf Merchant
Aweme Nisasesi, Elf Merchant

Deceased
```

16th Malachite

My attention has turned again to the two miners in their static purgatory. I just hope they have no idea of what state they're in.

`Dante' Edëmkezat, Lost Soul , "Dante' Keydanger", Strange Mood

`Dante' Edëmkezat has been quite content lately. She has lost a friend to tragedy recently. She was knocked out during a cave-in lately. She had a fine drink lately. She received water recently. She slept uneasily due to noise lately. She slept in a very good bedroom recently. She admired a fine tastefully arranged Statue lately. She slept in a bedroom like a personal palace recently. She admired a fine Door lately. She was caught in the rain recently. She admired own fine Cabinet lately. She has been satisfied at work lately. She choked on dust underground lately.

Resuming my efforts to free the Arena's captives requires siege weaponry. Today I asked our Chief Engineer Meng (how I hate that name) to craft a ballista.



When the founders named this place, I am sure they envisioned this moment. Somehow, with literal tons of metal at our disposal, not one of our twelve previous overseers ever put together the three measly ballista parts we happen to need right now? No ballista parts. What are we, elves?

"'Creiydrek' Yearrings" Proficient Siege Operator

Well, what about --

Needs 3 catapult parts

-- oh fuck you, you know that? Why don't you just build the damn parts you need when I ask for the bloody engine?!

Here, I'll put it in writing.

Construct Catapult Parts
Fools! I am surrounded by them.

```
Construct rock Coffin
Construct Mechanisms
Construct rock Door
Construct rock Throne
                            30/30
Construct rock Coffer
                            30/30
Construct rock Floodgate
Construct rock Quern
                            3/3
Construct rock Millstone
Construct Bed
                            10/10
Make wooden Barrel
Construct iron Bin
Decorate With bone
Decorate With bone
Decorate With
Decorate With
Decorate
```

Before long I discovered other items we're somehow lacking, or in short supply of, so I'll be busy juggling schedules in the office for most of the month. I'm going to need some of that numbing powder.

28 Malachite

Ilmoran renewed my faith in the dwarven race by producing some beautiful furniture for the new wing. Some choice favorites have been sent to my room. Due to a fortunate lack of patients, our new doctor is decorating the new pieces with the bone hoard we have by the fort entrance. Our miners and masons are all on new projects, food and booze production is positive, and we're starting to feel cheer again. We are doing it. We are making a comeback.

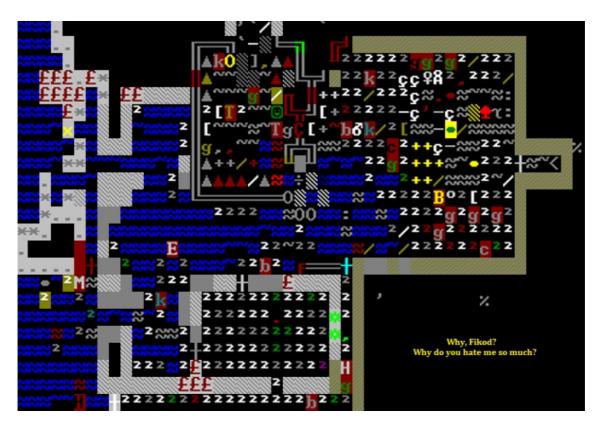
```
'Ilmoran' Amtulon has created a masterpiece! 
'Ilmoran' Amtulon has created a masterpiece!
```



What in the Windy...

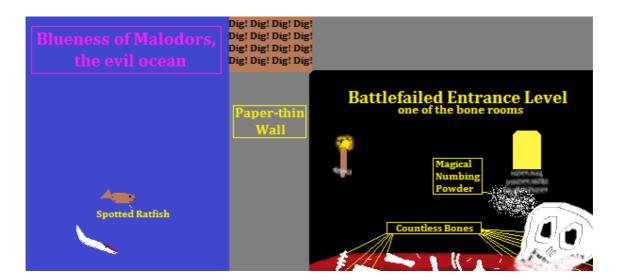


...Oh



So, the entire ocean is pouring into our bone yard, and it's spreading the blood and beast powder and grime all over everything in its path, and the place impossibly smells more hideous than before. It just goes to show you there's always a new low to sink to when you aren't very careful to tell the miners NOT to flood your home.

I suppose Fikod's not entirely to blame. If we're all going to die then at least I'm dying an honest dwarf: I told him to channel a bit of the shoreline so that when we fall into the ocean, we can actually have a chance at getting out instead of *drowning every time*. Now perhaps this was unnecessary, but if it saves lives, it saves lives! The point is, I told him to slope the shore. I did **not** tell him to flood the fort. I prepared a diagram of the accident to help explain my blunder to the liaison when I am forced to.



There comes a point in every dwarf's life when they must ask of themselves, "Am I loony?" I thought on that question many times before today, but there is a difference between thinking about a question and really, truly asking it of yourself, demanding an answer. I found that point today, when I watched as the raging water transformed our entrance into a ponderous vat of filth.

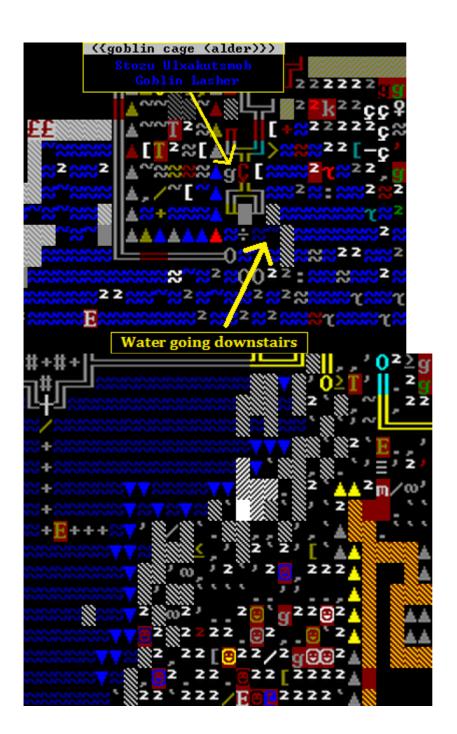
What was I still doing here? I wondered. I could run away, grab one of the many suits of armor and an axe that lay unused in the arsenal and flee this awful place. They'd think I'd gone mad, no one would question it. No one would miss me that much for that long.

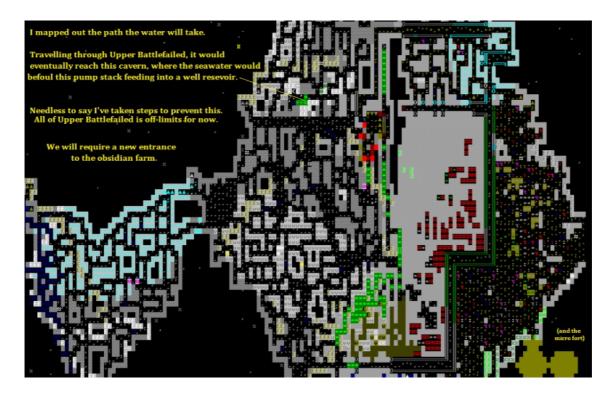


I did arm myself, but I did **not** leave. I am Creiydrek Yearrings, not Creiydrek the Beardless.

Galena

I met eyes with one of the goblins we kept in a cage by the entrance, knowing he'd soon be submerged in the vile water. The goblin was laughing. Fikod and I speedily assessed the situation.

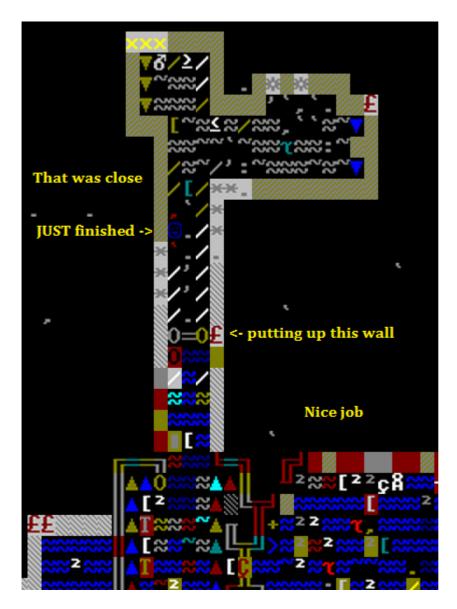




This might not be so terrible after all. I've rushed Fikod over to the stockpile to grab a few



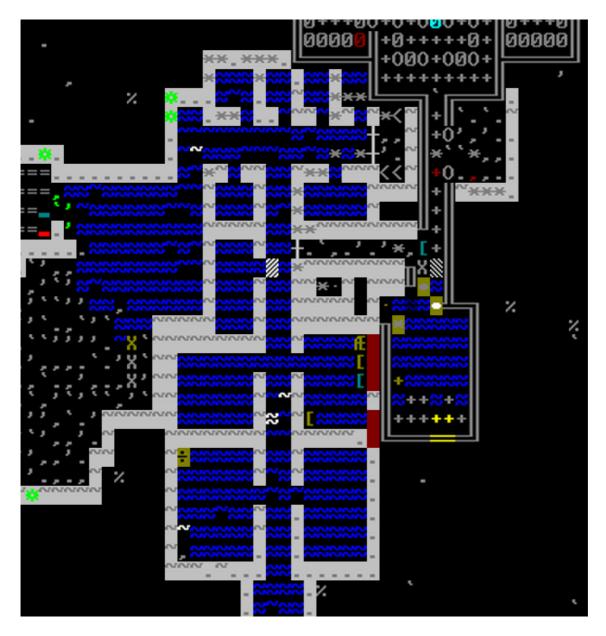
This fort deserves to drown along with everyone in it.



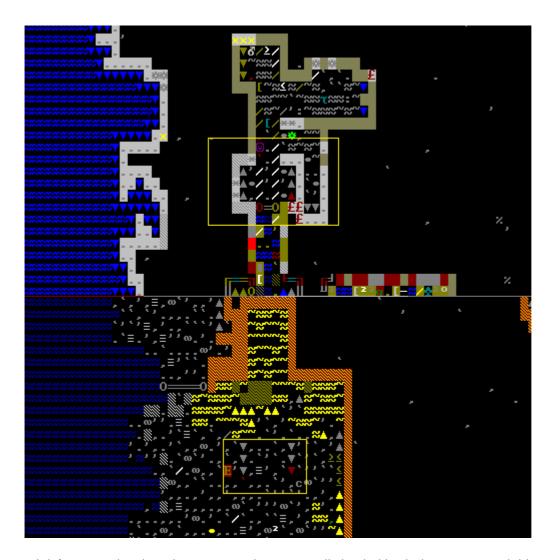
Oddam/Oglokoog/Whatever-Their-Name-Is managed to put up the final wall seconds before it was too late. We couldn't build exactly where I wanted to because *somebody* had indulged in far too much of the numbing dust for his own well-being and collapsed in the middle of the hall. The former doctor, of course. How can a single dwarf be so frowningly pathetic? Even writing his name draws my ire.

2nd Galena

The consequences of the flood weren't as damning as one might figure (I am staggered that we're still alive). Due to some brilliant design choices by one of the former overseers, Lower Battlefailed should be entirely unaffected by the disaster.



On the other hand, Upper Battlefailed is ruined. No one went in there much, so it's unlikely to be missed, but we had many valuable things stored down there. Such as all of our metal. All of it. Somehow. I'll need to speak with the miners and resume metal extraction. We also have to abandon the new wing before we even got a chance to enjoy it. Matuin's hard work and sacrifice have been entirely in vain. In the meanwhile, a new entryway to Lower Battlefailed has been carved.



I didn't see it take place, but our new doctor actually healed both the comatose children. She still has no idea what she is doing, but for whatever reason, fortune has smiled on both her and those two lads. We're all caught up in a rare spirit of celebration. Meng (the Engineer, not the Incompetent) has taken all the children outside to give them something constructive to do. It's good for them to be busy, and maybe they'll learn a thing or two in the process.

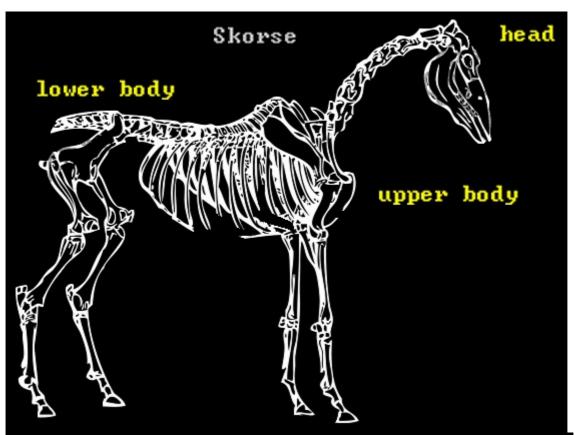


Cerol Mebzuthtaron, Child Cultist has been crushed under the collapsing ceiling.
A section of the cavern has collapsed!
iton Oddometur, Dwarven Child cancels Remove Construction: Resting injury.

I don't believe this. Cerol was killed when part of the wall fell on top of him. How is it that everyone named Meng in this fort is a complete imbecile? He's cut off from booze for three months, and barred from being alone with the children ever again. This terrible and completely preventable incident shames all of us.

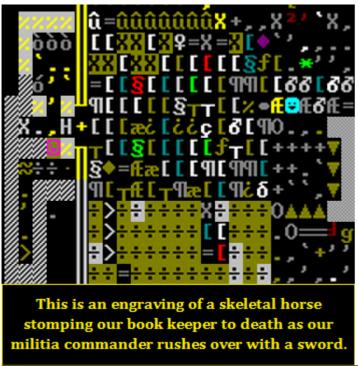
8th Galena

After some careful experimentation, I found out what the levers in front of the Arena operated.



Meng Tholast, Imcompetent cancels Pull the Lever: Interrupted by Skeletal Horse. `Ilmoran' Amtulon, Mason cancels Construct rock Door: Interrupted by Skeletal Horse.







As the lever was pulled, the shuttling of a cage was heard. The bookkeeper was immediately set upon by a skorse that charged out of the arena and across the room toward him. The Swordsmaster Zon attempted to save him, but only succeeded in turning the beasts ire upon himself. I was about to unsheathe my blade when I saw Kubuk flash across the room like a steel-clad lightning bolt.

```
the Axedwarf Kûbuk Tiristmondûl Azmol Monom is fighting!
The Axedwarf stands up.
The Axedwarf hacks The Skeletal Horse in the lower body with his -steel battle axe- and the severed part sails off in an arc!

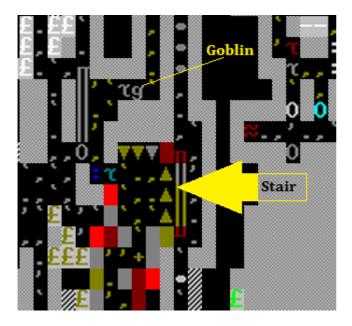
Kubuk runs up, saving both their lives by chopping the skorse in half with one swing.

Everything I've seen him kill, he's killed that way.
```

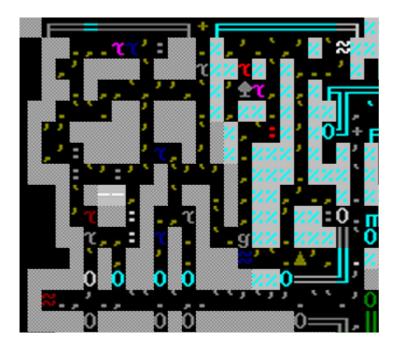
A goblin who had been seriously beaten under our care took advantage of the prevailing chaos to make a daring escape.



Having no idea where to run, the creature fled into the caves...



...pursued...



...and lost...



.by our valiant soldiers.



The Swordsmaster has made sport of hunting it. Without a weapon the pathetic goblin's no threat to anyone. He'll probably be eaten by some creature of the depths before Zon ever finds him. I should thank the escapee for revealing that our entire fortress is widely exposed to the underground labyrinth. If I thought the dwarf responsible for that still lived, I would have them executed.

22nd Galena

```
A Skeletal Buzzard has stolen ({rat weed [5]})!

It has started raining.

A Skeletal Buzzard has stolen ({bloated tubers [5]})!

A Skeletal Buzzard has stolen ({muck roots [5]})!

A Skeletal Buzzard has stolen ({muck roots [5]})!

'Ilmoran' Amtulon has created a masterpiece!

A Zombie Buzzard has stolen ({bloated tubers [5]})!

A Zombie Buzzard has stolen ({rat weed [5]})!

A Zombie Buzzard has stolen ({muck roots [5]})!

A Zombie Buzzard has stolen ({bloated tubers [5]})!
```

More buzzards have been spotted recently. The guards are carefully watching for any sign of attack. Ilmoran continues to work on new furnishings while our pariah of a Chief Engineer has been building my ballista parts.

```
'Creiydrek' îdathel has been happy lately. He slept in a bedroom like a personal palace recently. He admired a fine Door lately. He slept without a proper room recently? He was forced to endure the decay of a friend! He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He was comforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. He has been satisfied at work lately. He is a dubious worshipper of Otik the Blueness of Flickers. He is tough.

'Creiydrek' îdathel likes brimstone, fine pewter, white chalcedony, greaves, hatch covers, ballista parts and cows for their haunting moos. When possible, he prefers to consume dwarven beer. He absolutely detests large roaches.

He has very good intuition, a very good sense of empathy and a good spatial sense, but he has an iffy memory, an iffy sense for music, little willpower, little linguistic ability and really poor focus.

He can handle stress. He tends not to openly express emotions. He loves new and fresh ideas. He is slow to trust others. He finds immodesty distasteful. He has a sense of duty. He holds his breath when he's nervous. He needs alcohol to get through the working day.

He is getting used to tragedy.
```

Frankly, journal, I've been feeling pretty good lately, despite all our mishaps and mayhem. Those of us who survive now enjoy hope, comfort, and relative safety. The flood may even turn out to be a blessing in disguise, since it has made Battefailed more secure than ever. And, I adore my sword. I'm trying to think of a name for it.

```
This is a well-crafted steel short sword.

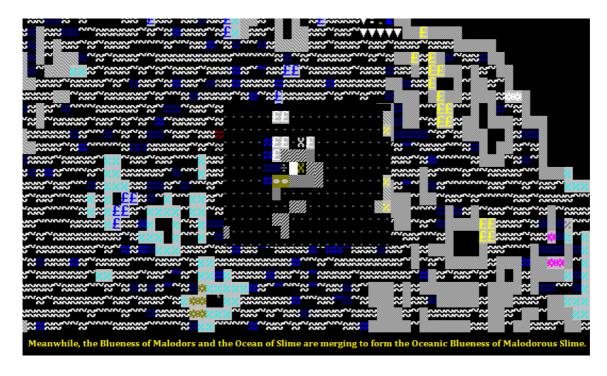
Two Kills

Two zombie elk ($\partial \text{in Battlefailed}

Slayer

'Cutie' Heldringed the dwarf, d. 510, two kills
```

I haven't abandoned the two lost souls in the Arena, but I'm still waiting on those ballista parts. I hope this plan works, because if it doesn't, we're moving on to water, then magma.



24th Galena

Several human traders have been sighted in the distance, and I'm glad to receive our tall neighbors. Fikod was asked to open the gate and allow them entry while I traveled up to the surface to welcome our guests. Hopefully they've brought some metal here.





The Hill Titan shakes The Human Axeman around by the left lower arm!
The Human Elite Wrestler loses hold of the ({large bronze left gauntlet}).
The Human Elite Wrestler loses hold of the ({large great white shark leather left glove}).
The Human Elite Wrestler loses hold of the ({bronze shield}).
The left lower arm is ripped away and remains in The Hill Titan's grip!
The Human Elite Wrestler stands up.
The Hill Titan charges at The Human Elite Wrestler!
The Hill Titan collides with The Human Elite Wrestler!
The Human Elite Wrestler is knocked over and tumbles backward!

Sunst String and S

```
Shows a serious of the serious of th
```

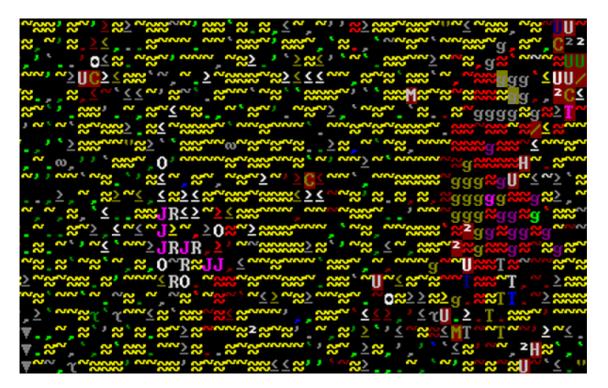
Shethbah Sudemkir, Human Elite Wrestler "Shethbah Helpgate" Tired Winded lower body Extreme Pain head right upper arm UU left lower arm Her upper body right hand nt upper leg



Limestone

I managed to catch Fikod just before he pulled the lever to open the gate. With a yelp, I ran down to him with my sword held aloft. He looked at me in terror, raising his pick defensively (can't blame the lad) but I steered toward the control mechanism and smashed it with the blade, rendering the lever inoperable. It will not be repaired until proper security measures are put in place.

The miner looked incredibly worried, so I breathlessly explained the situation. First, as I watched from our lookout post above the fortress walls, I noticed a strange heliotrope mass emerge from the bubbling Blueness. The creature let out a loud screech and tore off toward the hapless traders with unbelievable speed. It was on them in moments, tearing the arm from a guard and stampeding him down. It was then when I saw a few goblins appear at the top of the hill marking the edge of our territory. Then a few more goblins appeared, and a few more, until there were about sixty goblins, some mounted on beasts of war, declaring themselves with their battle drums.



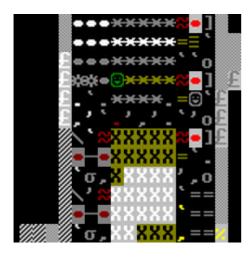
No doubt our attackers came here for Battlefailed, but the humans fighting the titan drew their attention quickly enough. Before long the local undead were attracted by so much commotion and

threw themselves into the fray. It didn't take long for all the humans to die. The giant purple arachnid (I call it Pado) was overrun in the end, covered and rendered to greasy dust by the swarm of invaders. The goblins were clearly victorious. It's truly regrettable we could do nothing to prevent those innocent deaths, but I won't risk our lives or limbs at this critical time. Nonetheless, the event has so troubled me, I've been taking too much of the numbing stuff as of late.

Resting injury.

15th Limestone

The month has been busy enough for three times our number. We've been smoothing down the stone of our most frequented areas. I have Meng slaughtering some of our animals since we have far too many and it's one of the only things he does well. I have every dwarf producing various items the fortress needs, to be stockpiled until ready. It's my hope that future rulers will be free to worry about things other than whether or not we have any ballista parts. Fortunately, a huge metal stockpile was discovered in the forge room, our prayers being answered by a previous overseer who'd been smart enough to realize we'd need it. I must learn this dwarf's name and build them a platinum tomb.

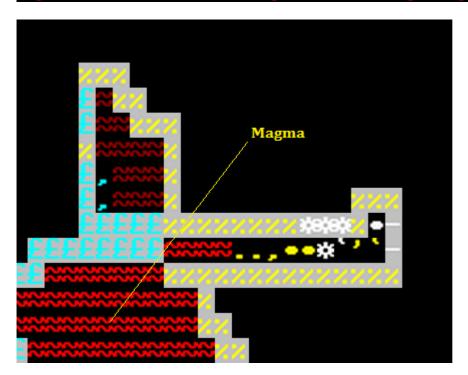


Since so many of our dwarves have a fondness for the True Metal, we've started planning for adamantine extraction.



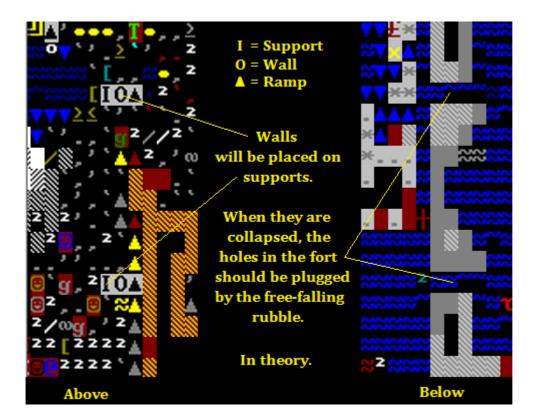
We don't need much of the empyreal ore for so few of us, just enough to fashion a few garments and blades and pieces of armor, so I've told the miners to only dig very little for now. Unfortunately, there have been a few delays.

Sigun èzumled Orshet Astis, Captain cancels Dig: Dangerous terrain.



Thank the stone, the magma hasn't gone anywhere it can kill us.

Meng will be turned into a useful dwarf yet or my name isn't Creiydrek. I've come to pity the bastard more than I dislike him so I'm trying to teach him to be a mechanic. At my request he's actually presented to me a plan for cutting off the endless flow of seawater filling our home.

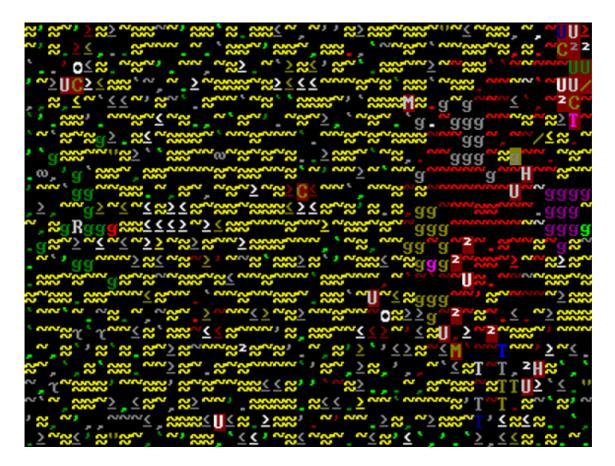


I just hope it works unlike everything else I've tried to do here. I once commented during our days of success that our fortress' name was ironic. Fate seems to embrace sincerity.

Our two wounded dwarves died of thirst, our only drinking water having somehow been tainted.



Limestone 28



Our besiegers are still out there, camped on the killing field as if waiting for us to open the gate. They probably expected a fight from us; they cannot know we've lost three quarters of the population since last they came. I hope they give up and go home before the caravan from Dastot Cog arrives. From the lookout post, I've been watching the leader of the invaders, a larger greyskin mounted on top of a Rutherer, and his three personal guards.

Stâsost Stroxstozu	
Stozu Otosurar	
Stozu Kutsmobolôt	
Stozu Lubamkutsmob	

They've engaged in the worthy task of cleansing the land of our undead problem. Moreover, they seem to be succeeding. Goblins may be filthy brutes, but they apparently have their uses.

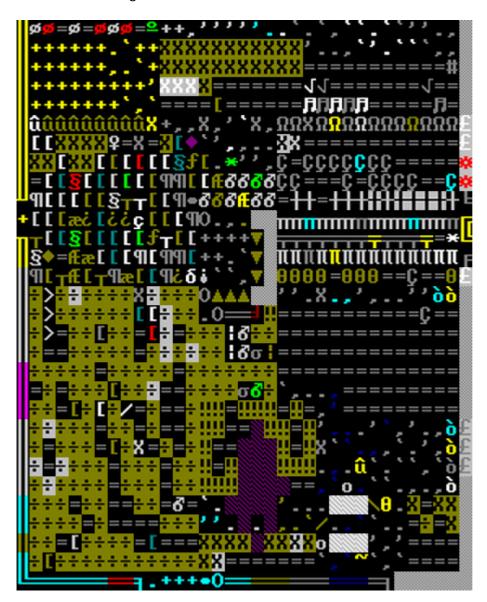
```
The flying ({*copper arrow*}) strikes The Zombie Elk
The flying ({iron bolt}) strikes The Zombie Elk
The flying ({copper bolt}) strikes The Zombie Elk
```

No skeletal elk on the plain today. Just plain, regular elk. I showed them to Edzul today, she'd never seen one before.

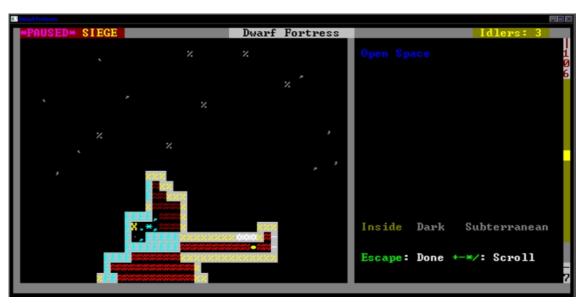
In the coming month we should meet the Dwarven caravan, assuming our unwelcome visitors have left our doorstep by then. I hope they decide to go soon, because we have a dire shortage of lumber and it's been holding up my attempts to rescue the forsaken miners.

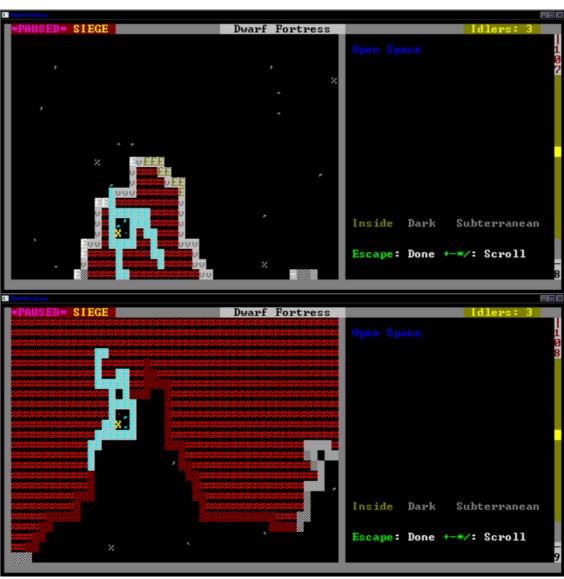
```
'Ilmoran' Amtulon has created a masterpiece!
Dîshmab Gïnonkadôl Zugoblûk Tomus, Murderer cancels Construct Bed: Needs lo
You have struck green tourmaline!
The Stray Mule (Tame) has been struck down.
ùshrir Sibrekevon, chief medical dwarf cancels Decorate With ivory/tooth:
Needs unrotten ivory/tooth body part.
Fikod Koganilush Dumatedod Egom, Miner cancels Construct Ballista Parts:
Needs logs.
```

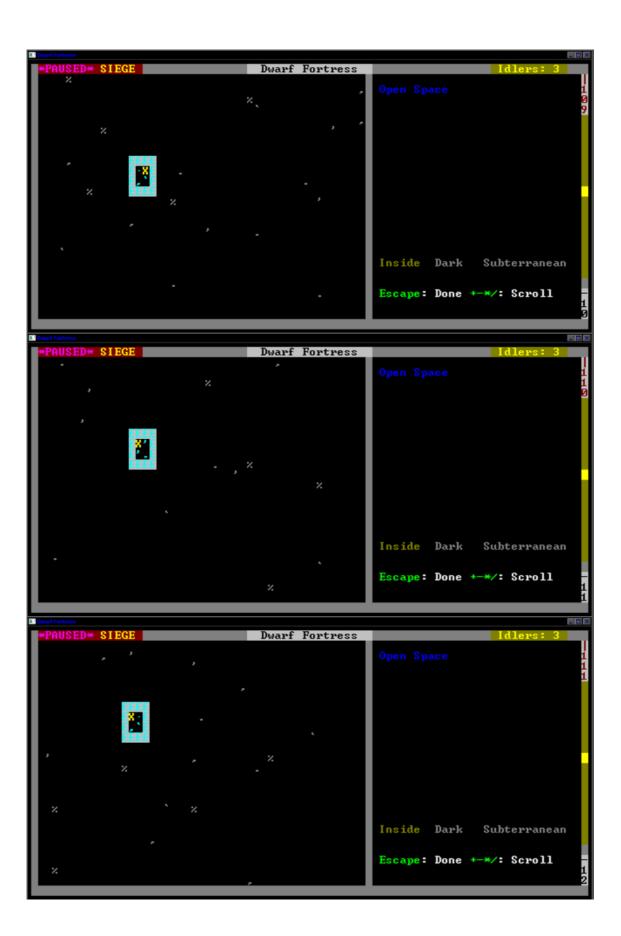
Our hope is that the traders make it here safely, that we may unload on them our growing pile of junk, now that our hoard has come to resemble a garbage dump of tattered clothes and barrels stuffed with reeking animal fat.

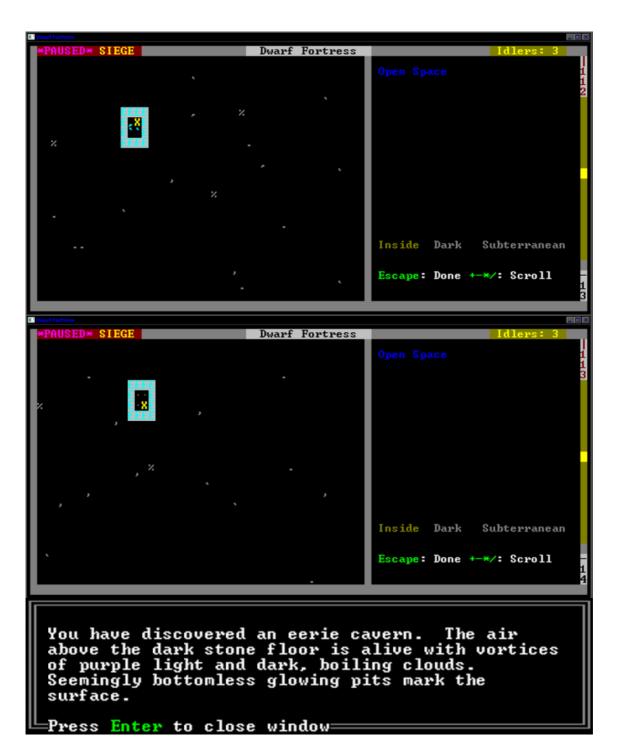


I turn eighty in a few months. The big eight-oh. Just what I need right now -- middle-age. As if this job wasn't giving me enough gray hair already.

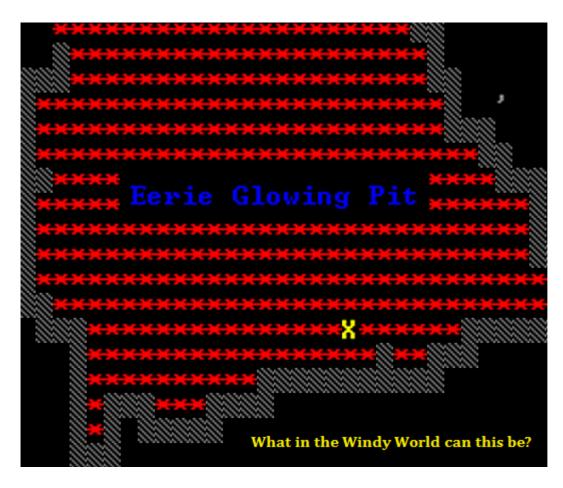




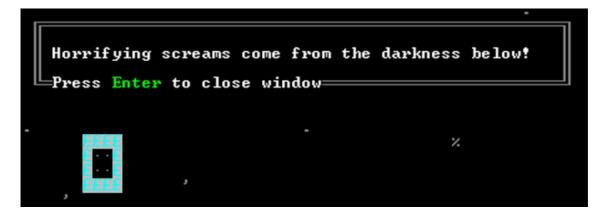




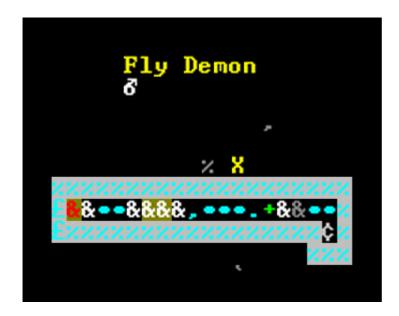
waning keeper



larval pain



guiding ritual



seizing external



shadow lantern

The mayor is caught in a cloud of flames! [MORE]

world sunset



Zon Ethadadil Berkas
"Zon Decentwalled the
Creator of Unolabod.

Station

Legendary Swordsdwarf
Dabbling Macedwarf
Skilled Shield User
Talented Armor User
Legendary Fighter
Adequate Wrestler
Competent Striker
Expert Dodger
Dabbling Misc. Object

run yearrings

The militia commander strikes The Phantom Of Brine in the left rear leg with his (iron shield) and the severed part sails off in an arc! The militia commander strikes The Phantom Of Brine in the upper body with his (iron shield), breaking away the tissue! The militia commander blocks the fire.

pitiless hunters

```
The Fly Demon strikes at The militia commander but the shot is blocked? The Fly Demon strikes at The militia commander but the shot is blocked? The Fly Demon strikes at The militia commander but the shot is blocked? The Fly Demon strikes at The militia commander but the shot is blocked? The Fly Demon strikes at The militia commander but the shot is blocked? The Fly Demon strikes at The militia commander but the shot is blocked?

Stunned upper body
```

inadequate might

The Steam Monster kicks The militia commander in the left upper arm from behind with her left first foot, but the attack is deflected by The militia commander's steel mail shirt!

The Haunt Of Snow kicks The militia commander in the upper body with its right fifth foot, bruising the muscle, jamming the left false rib through the liver and tearing apart the liver!

The Shade Banshee punches The militia commander in the upper body with her right hand, bruising the muscle and bruising the liver through the steel mail shirt!

The Shade Banshee kicks The militia commander in the left upper arm with his left foot, bruising the muscle through the steel mail shirt!

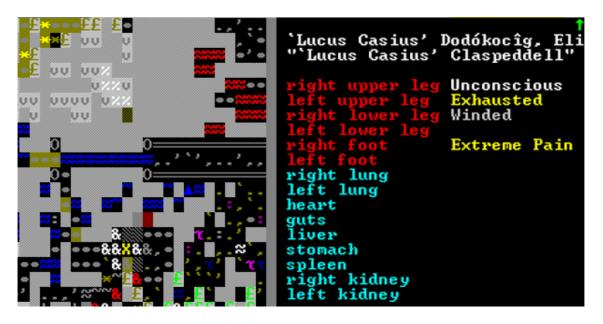
The Soot Demon kicks The militia commander in the left upper arm with his right foot, bruising the muscle through the steel mail shirt!

The Steam Monster kicks The militia commander in the right hand from behind with her right third foot, but the attack is deflected by The militia commander's *steel right gauntlet+!

The Haunt Of Snow kicks The militia commander in the lower body with its right second foot, bruising the muscle and bruising the pancreas through the steel mail shirt!

```
The Brine Fiend strikes at The Captain but the shot is blocked!
The Brine Fiend strikes at The Captain but the shot is blocked!
The Brine Fiend charges at The Captain!
The Brine Fiend attacks The Captain but She jumps away!
The Brine Fiend charges at The Captain!
The Brine Fiend collides with The Captain!
The Brine Fiend collides with The Captain!
The Captain is knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Brine Fiend gores The Captain in the head, bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing apart the brain!
The Captain has been knocked unconscious!
Sigun ezumled Orshet Astis, Captain has been struck down.
```

endearing shouts



endless duel



infinite light

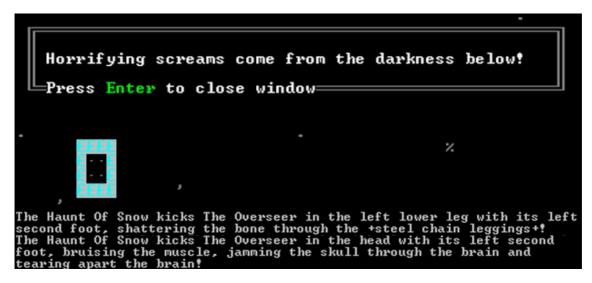


mildewed survivors

```
`Creiydrek' îdathel, Overseer cancels Rest: Interrupted by Haunt Of Snow. shale Table destroyed by Brine Fiend. gypsum Table destroyed by Fly Demon. Likot Regakam, Dwarven Child cancels Release Pet: Animal inaccessible. silver Door destroyed by Soot Demon. Likot Regakam, Dwarven Child cancels Release Pet: Animal inaccessible. Likot Regakam, Dwarven Child cancels Release Pet: Animal inaccessible. iron Throne destroyed by Uzolngathsesh, Fly Demon. Domas Manironul, Cow (Tame) has bled to death. 'Creiydrek' îdathel, Overseer has been struck down.
```

!!!!!!







Dear Journal,

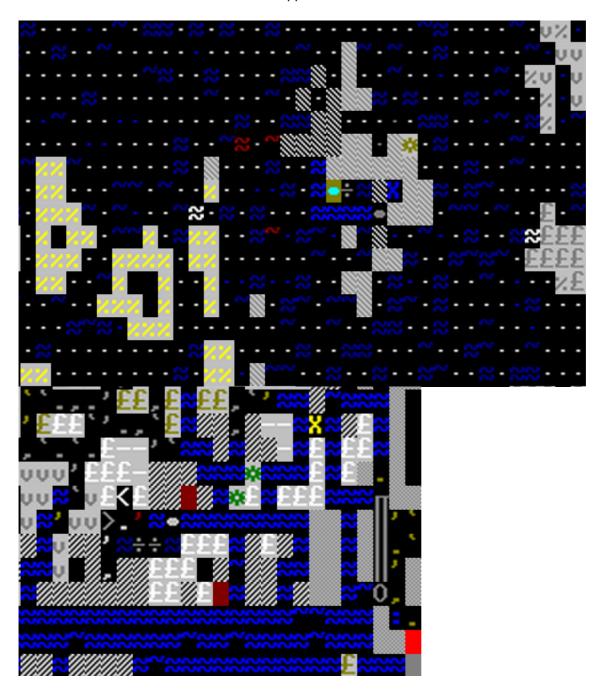
We have ceased adamantine extraction before it even started. I don't feel like explaining right now.

Sandstone

Seeing everyone you know torn apart by unfathomable monsters can have a rescinding effect on decisions you've made, even if only in dreams. As if to confirm my hunch of ill omen, some odd noises can been heard from the other side of the floodgate over our tree farm, as if there's a great beast rattling around in the muck, splashing it against the door...

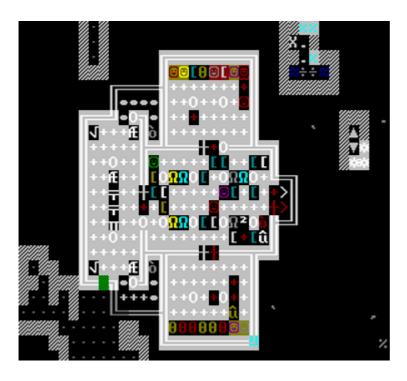


 $... while the ocean continues to stream into Upper \ {\tt Battle failed}.$



We'll need to do something about that soon.

7th Sandstone



Today I took Edzul with me on my trip to the hospital. I spent some time with Meng Groupwounds, who is there nursing a concussion and a broken foot. We spoke for a while and he appears to be doing poorly; he insists we call him Pisano from now on and claims he doesn't remember how his negligence killed two of the children. If he thinks a new name will help us forget, he's mistaken.

He punctuated the entire conversation with compliments for the drowning dwarf statues. Soon as we're able I'm changing the decor around here.

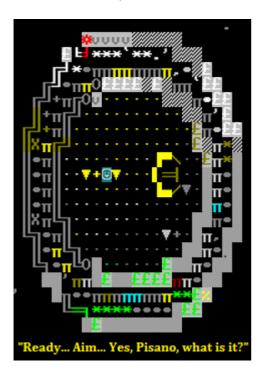


I'll respect his decision to resign as Chief Engineer without any complaint. He wants to follow Ilmoran like Daetrin is and became an apprentice under him. I can take over his former duties while he follows his dream. My new projects need builders anyway.

9th Sandstone



Every day as I walk to my bedroom I have to look at that cursed Arena and marvel at the plight of our unreachable comrades, and today I have had enough of it. I am going over there to try and put them out of their misery.



Pisano dramatically shouted into the Arena bearing a petition signed by over a quarter of the fort. It seems they want me to abandon efforts to free Leesin and Dante from their torment and have denounced me as a "heartless fiend" among other things.

Heartless? Have they no idea of the pain I am trying to ease? Not that I do, but if I were in their state I'd want someone to try and kill me. I'm happy to put that in ink.

Rather than risk another fort-wide tantrum I've agreed to hold off on my attempts for now. In

public. In private I've doubled my efforts. To provide a fun activity for us we've started engraving the stone once more. Nothing too outlandish was imaged so far.

```
ôggon ïngiz, "The Vomit of Ceilings"
a rat by 'Oglokoog' Stukónid.
Shashmer, "The Hellish Uncle"
thin crosses by 'Oglokoog' Stukónid
```

14th Sandstone

```
Lmoran
                has created a masterpiece!
        Amtulon
                has created a masterpiece!
lmoran'
        Amtulon has created a masterpiece!
        rock Throne (10) has been completed.
        Amtulon has created a masterpiece!
lmoran
        Amtulon has created a masterpiece!
        Amtulon has created a masterpiece!
        rock Floodgate (2) has been completed.
lmoran'
        Amtulon has created a masterpiece!
        Horse (Tame) has been struck down.
 Stray
        Amtulon has created
                            a masterpiece!
        Amtulon has created a masterpiece!
        Amtulon has created a masterpiece!
        rock Quern (3) has been completed.
        Amtulon has created a masterpiece!
lmoran'
```

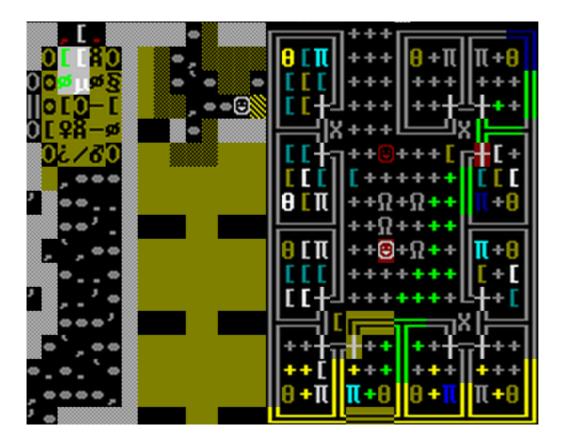
Every day Ilmoran provides a new assortment of truly breathtaking statues, doors and other furnishings. He's begun to fashion us dedicated pieces as well. I don't know what we'd do without him and his craft to liven this place up.

```
This is an exceptional gabbro statue of `Creiydrek' Yearrings.

The item is an exceptionally designed image of `Creiydrek' Yearrings the dwarf and a hatch cover in gabbro by `Ilmoran' Amtulon. `Creiydrek' Yearrings is admiring the hatch cover.

Ilmoran, you're great.
```

We've started turning this place into a home to really be proud of. With the plan for the added wing out of the picture I've focused on expanding our main hall and making it as beautiful as possible. If we cannot live somewhere nice we can at least make it look like we do.



21st Sandstone

I've given Kubuk the unpleasant duty of tidying up the front entrance so we can build a proper series of weapon traps there. This is for his elf slaughter, and he'll be locked outside with food and liquor until he's made some headway.



In fact, I can hear him yelling down to us now. I should go and see what's bothering him.

```
The Enemy Is Upon Us!
A vile force of darkness has arrived!
```

24th Sandstone

More goblins have come, the year's first siege not even ending before the second one began.

Stozu Lubamkutsmob, general	Invader
Dostngosp Ståsostzugstrux, Goblin Hamm	nerman <mark>er</mark>
Ngoso Ngustûsnang, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Ngebzo Engroraspuz, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
üsbu Ngomlos, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Arstruk Arstruksaslu, Goblin Hammerman	ilnvader
Stozu Kutsmobolôt, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Bäx Kutsmobuksos, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Damsto Bemlunguk, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Zom Stospdabgozru, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Song Stothogam, Goblin Hammerman	lnvader
Smunstu Dunospstozu, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Olngö Snamozngure, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Ngokang Stosbûbsmatru, Goblin Hammerma	annvader
Ago Umospgögust, Goblin Hammerman Snodub Etospaslot, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Zolak Avetutûsbu, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Ngoso Arstruklungo, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Zolak Ngomstosmû. Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Bosa ûduksos, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Asno Ngustûstrodno, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Ber Saxoxuspgas, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Smunstu Olngöstangdo, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Båx Bemuspra, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Ngerxung Bostusong, Goblin Hammerman	Invader
Estrur Ngerxungongas, Goblin Hammerman	nInvader
Ber Osmösptuz, Goblin Hammer Lord	Caged P
ûsbu Snangzomus, Goblin Hammer Lord	Invader
Damsto Korustosbûb, Goblin Spearman	Caged P
Smunstu ongtumazstrog, Goblin Spearman	ıInvader
Atu Aspâdkutsmob, Goblin Spearman	lnvader
Ngokang Rosusmzom, Goblin Spearman	Invader
Bosa Ozudmôklo, Goblin Spearman Utes Uksosesm, Goblin Spearman	Invader
Utes Snangmôklo, Goblin Spearman	Invader
oces shanghorto, dontth spearman	
Mato Oslemosta, Goblin Spearman	Invader
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Băx Gozruumkost, Goblin Axeman	Invader
Snang Amxutotsmab, Goblin Axeman	Invader
Ngom Utesospgu, Goblin Axeman	Invader
Olngö Gugosnang, Goblin Axeman	Invader
Song Umuamxu, Goblin Axeman	Invader
Strodno Bonrospogur, Goblin Axeman	Invader
Nako Kukgozyu, Gohlin Axeman	Invader
Song Mokutes Goblin Aveman	Inwader
Zon Ngehzongaemuk Gohlin Avenan	Invades
Wake Okometochûh Cohlin Oveman	Invades
Corny Numerory Coblin Avenue	Invades
Pon Mutagunan Cablin Oveman	Invader
Poor Opposition Coblin Oversh	Invader
Vutanah Olasiinak Cahlin Osa Land	Invader
Kutsmob Olngözok, Goblin Axe Lord	Carad
Asno Ostrasmsmunstu, Goblin Swordsman	Caged I
Olngö Amxuozö, Goblin Swordsman	invader
Gozru Snodubslon, Goblin Swordsman	Invader
Utes Arosmunstu, Goblin Swordsman	Invader
Utes Snosstrospkutsmob. Goblin Swordsm	anvader
Ngerxung Amxustrodno, Goblin Maceman	Invader
Damsto Uslukarstruk, Goblin Maceman	Invader
Ngerxung Atuenggö, Goblin Maceman	Invader
Tode Ngönogur, Goblin Maceman	Invader
Olngö Saslustotho, Goblin Maceman	Invader
Smunstu Langgozru, Goblin Maceman	Invader
Stozu Ukgeungust, Goblin Maceman	Invader
Stosbûb Xukongazstrog, Goblin Maceman	Invader
Osta Ngokangurust, Goblin Maceman	Invader
Ståsost Lozaspsmunstu, Goblin Mace Lor Amxu Ngebzoongo, Goblin Blowgunner	dnvader
Amxu Ngebzoongo, Goblin Blowgunner	Invader
Nguslu Smadosta, Goblin Blowgunner Strodno Obxoggozru, Goblin Lasher	Invader
Studden Obvergerous Cablin Lackey	
atronon onxoggozro, Gontin Dasner	Caged P
Ologo Kutsmohsmusmtä, Goblin Lasher	Caged P
Olngö Kutsmobsmusmtä, Goblin Lasher	Caged P Caged P Caged P
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```
Wild A
Skeletal Elk
                                              Undead
Rutherer
 boratac,
            Jabberer
Giant Olm
Rutherer
Giant Olm
Rutherer
 abberer
Rutherer
<mark>Zonolngö,</mark>
Giant Olm
            Jabberer
Rutherer
 abber
Giant Olm
Jabberer
Jabberer
Troll
Troll
                                               Invader
```

I don't suppose we'll be seeing that caravan.

Timber

I turn eighty today, but I feel over two-hundred.

I didn't expect anyone to notice, but children can be so kind when they're happy and well-fed. It may only be the festivities but I'm starting to feel a shade of joy once again. The doctor gave me a fine mechanism for the occasion.

```
The Dwarven child Likot Regakam has organized a party at shale Table. This is a finely-crafted gabbro mechanisms.

On the item is a superiorly designed image of iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto the savanna titan in horse bone by ishrir Sibrekevon. iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the savanna titan iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto in The Plains of Ooze in a time before time.

On the item is a superiorly designed image of iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto the savanna titan in elk bone by ishrir Sibrekevon. iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the savanna titan iddor Deerlies the Moist Grotto in The Plains of Ooze in a time before time.
```

Our foul-smelling friends are still outside, and they were heartily greeted in the traditional manner by the local fauna.

```
upper body Unconscious lower body head right upper arm left lower arm left lower arm right hand left hand right upper leg left upper leg left lower leg left foot left foot
```

Troll blood is oddly pretty. Otherwise, there's been no interruption from them.

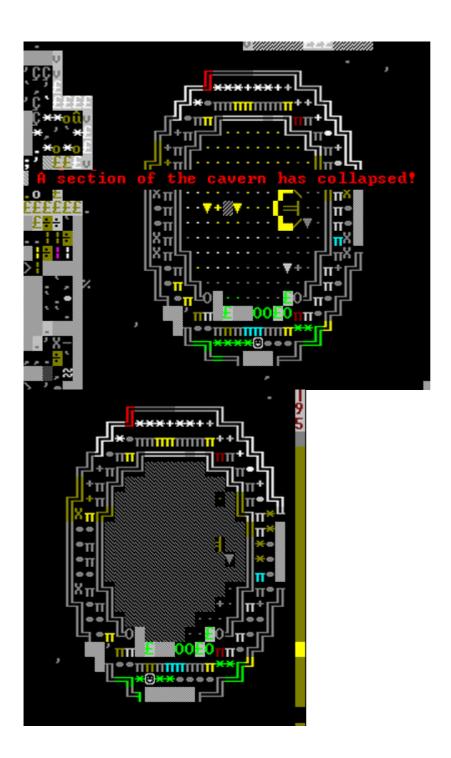
4th Timber

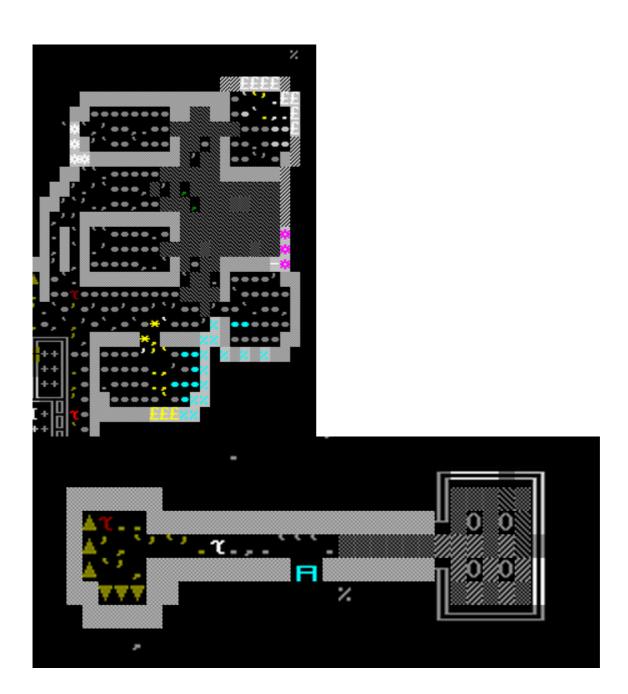
The awful statues in the hospital have been replaced with something more uplifting and inspirational to the dwarven soul, with the bonus of being far less depressing in general.

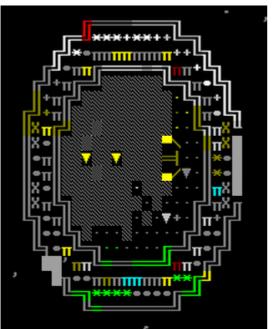
```
This is a finely-crafted granite statue of Kogsak Bridgedurn. The item is a finely-designed image of Kogsak Bridgedurn the dwarf and Voicedpillars the fungiwood bed in granite by 'Daetrin' Lokumamal. Kogsak Bridgedurn is raising Voicedpillars. The artwork relates to the creation of Voicedpillars in Battlefailed by the dwarf Kogsak Bridgedurn in the early spring of 510.
```

8th Timber

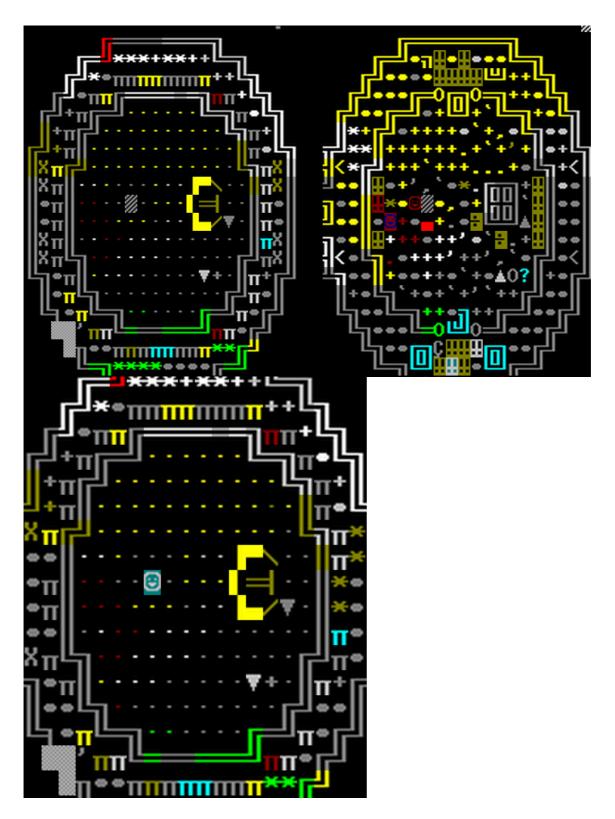
Yesterday I tried once again to emancipate Leesin and Dante.











The Babysaver was killed when she was caught in an updraft of dust from the cave-in and plummeted into the arena, smacking hard into the stone floor. I'll miss her. Or him. I don't know anymore.

```
'Oglokoog' Stukónid has been ecstatic lately. He ate a legendary meal lately. He slept in a very good bedroom recently. He admired a fine the admired own fine Container lately. He had a nice bath recently. He legendary dining room recently. He was comforted by a wonderful cage recently. He admired a fine tastefully arranged Statue lately. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He was and recuperate lately. He has been satisfied at work lately. He c suffocated of underground lately. He sustained major injuries recently. He is a dubious worshipper of Rab.

He is very strong, but he is quick to tire, clumsy, quite susceptible to disease and very slow to heal.
```

The miners, of course, are exactly the same. I give up. There's no point in trying to save lives by endangering those of others. I feel terrible.

14th Timber

Meng and I went to the surface together to trigger the supports holding our massive leak-stoppers.



You can guess how that turned out.



The walls just crumbled to dust as soon as they broke through the ground. I wonder what would happen if we tried using metal instead. Unfortunately we haven't the time, because the holes left in the shore by our experiment have given me an idea, which was immediately put in production. I'm going to take a nice bath in the filthy ocean while I ponder it.

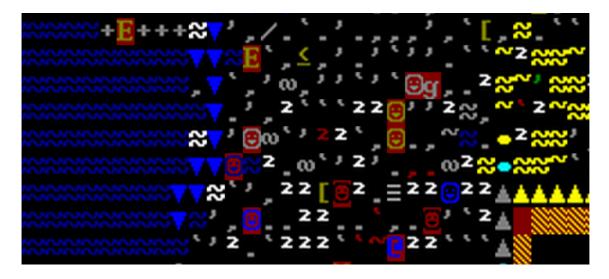
```
Muddy hematite
Water [1/7]
A small pile of mud
A spattering of Litast Dyewor
A dusting of forgotten beast
A spattering of Em Hatedsweat
A pile of vomit
A spattering of giant olm blo

**Eff**

**Eff**
```

21st Timber

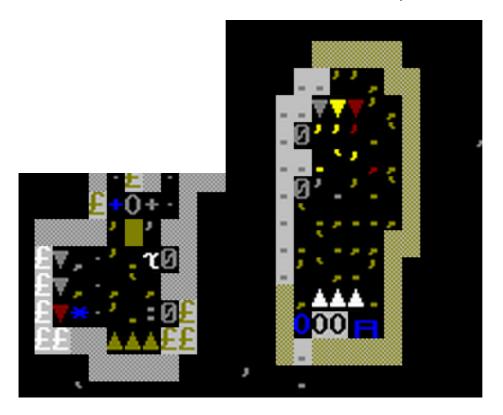
This month has been three long weeks of disappointment, but we hope to turn things around by fully moving ahead with our work to make Battlefailed beautiful. If anyone ever comes here again I want their first thoughts of the fortress to be as pleasant as possible and not, well...



...sad. That's why we've started really spiffing the place up. When we're finished here we shall rival the Mountainhomes in splendor and GraspedSeduce will look like the dunghole it is in comparison. Yes, I am probably kidding myself, but that's not ever stopped me before.

28th Timber

Work continues on renovation. We must maximize our usable space

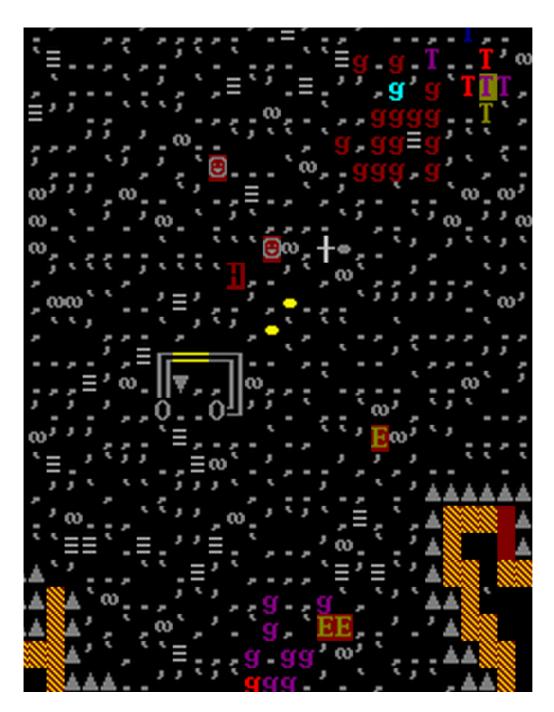


and refashion a few paths here and there. I am pleased with our progress so far.



Winter has come. The caravan never arrived. We are forsaken.

Meanwhile, the goblins discover something northeast of Battlefailed.



Moonstone

When I took control of Battlefailed I was enticed by the prospect of power and fame, and the prestige of having picked up the pieces of Battlefailed's fall. Some time between the flood and the dozens of deaths that occurred on my watch, it became less of a concern. Now that, for all our troubles, we are at last emerging from the dark that's engulfed us all year, I find I don't want this position at all. I remain at my station only because I have sworn to. There will be no prestige, no recognition, because the caravan has not come and I fear that it's never going to. That said, such things have long ceased to be my motivation.

At first I had figured on maintaining my position well into the coming years, but when Winter is over I will bow to tradition with masked relief, because one year of this work is enough for any dwarf's lifetime.

Let's see, what happened today? I met with the mayor, who agreed that adamantine extraction was an unwise idea at this time.



I checked out the new dining room furnishings that were completed late last night.



That's about it, except that the doctor died during a suspicious roof collapse I believe was intended to kill me.



I only narrowly escaped the doctor's fate, the worst of the rubble glancing off my armor. The Bronze Ages are investigating.



14th Moonstone

While renovations and new building projects are underway, I took a trip up to look at the goblins from afar. They're still having daily skirmishes with the undead.



Yet unless my eyes are too sun-struck to see, they appear to be herding and tending some livestock that isn't decayed. I'm thrilled that they're feeling at home. My hopes that the goblins would leave have dissolved like a pillar of salt in the sea.

```
Muskox

Muskox
```

21st Moonstone

Because we are all tired of wondering each night if a goblin will escape from its cage and cut our throats while we sleep, we've started executing our prisoners in the Accursed Arena.

```
Ber Osmösptuz, Goblin Hammer Lord
Mato Osonuksos, Goblin Axeman
Estrur Ngomsnol, Goblin Axeman
Stâsost Snådstozu, Goblin Axeman
ûsbu Utesotsmor, Goblin Axeman
Olngö Zomnabok, Goblin Axeman
Troll Lye Maker
Skeletal Horse
Skeletal Groundhog
```

The first was a Goblin Hammerlord that Zon dispatched with ease.

```
The militia commander slashes The Goblin Hammer Lord in the right upper arm with his +steel short sword+ and the severed part sails off in an
arc!
                                                                                           ({*copper low boot*}).
x({*cave spider silk sock*})x.
({*copper low boot*}).
x({*cave spider silk sock*})x.
({*iron chain leggings*}).
x({*giant bat leather
        Goblin Hammer
Goblin Hammer
                                                                hold of
hold of
hold of
hold of
                                                                                   the
 Γhe
                                        Lord
                                                   loses
       Goblin Hammer Lord
                                                                                   the
the
the
                                                    loses
                                                   loses
loses
                                                                 hold of
                                                   loses
  rousers*})x.
he Goblin Hammer Lord loses hold of the x<<*cave spider silk
The militia commander slashes The Goblin Hammer Lord in the lower body with his +steel short sword+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!
                                                                                                                                       lower body
```

We let our captives keep their equipment as they were thrown into battle. We wanted them to have a fighting chance, after all -- we're not barbarians.



I was there, only to lend Zon a hand if the need should arise. I'm no stranger to fighting but I'm also no cold-blooded killer.

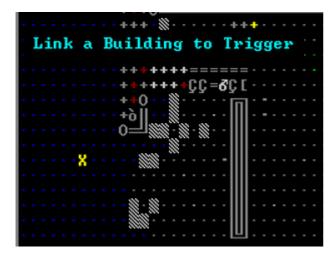


We were sure to clean up after the messy work was over.



7th Opal

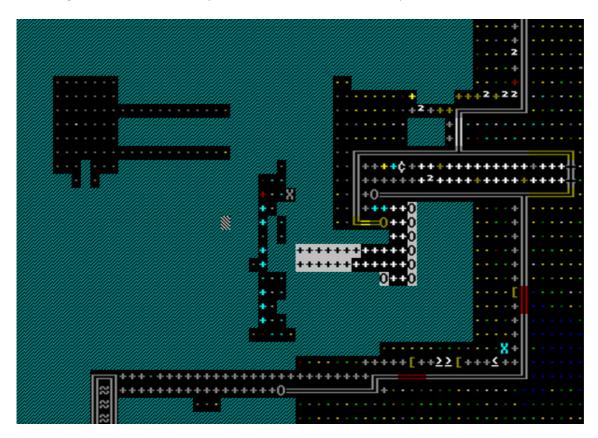
More stinkers arrived on the field. Let them come. Their doom is already at hand.



Yes, their doom. In fact, they've gathered by our front gate - the perfect spot for them to gather.



The bridge and the lever are only a diversion for that we've really been after.



I call it *FAILCANNON*. When it's completed we'll make the goblins rue the day they came to Battlefailed.

For it's completion I've drafted every able bodied dwarf, and Meng. *His* job is to draw the goblin's attention so our workers can build without being shot at.

```
The flying ({*iron bolt*}) strikes The Imcompetent Mechanic in the right lower leg, chipping the bone through the (giant rat leather high boot)? A ligament has been torn and a tendon has been torn? The flying ({*iron bolt*}) strikes The Imcompetent Mechanic in the right cheek, tearing the skin through the (troll leather robe)? The Imcompetent Mechanic gives in to pain. The Imcompetent Mechanic falls over.
```

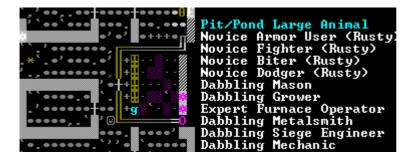
He's doing great, bless his soul. He still lives so I tried to convince Ilmoran to make a tribute of the shooting to put in my room. He said he'd think about it.

28th Opal

It's been a slow but busy month.



If you enjoy skeletons, then we have a terrific, outrageous palace of a home, and no one to share it with. I didn't realize the vast halls would feel so empty with just the twenty-three of us. I've been feeling anxious lately so I've taken it out on the prisoners for my continued good health. Remember lads, it's not murder if they're armed.



```
''Creiydrek' Yearrings'
Nguslu Ezlazolak,
"Nguslu Pisssin"
                                  Goblin Swor
        The Goblin Swordmaster misses The Overseer!
The Overseer slashes The Goblin Swordmaster in the left lower arm with
his (-steel short sword-) and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Overseer slashes The Goblin Swordmaster in the right upper arm with
his (-steel short sword-) and the severed part sails off in an arc!
                          îdathel has been ecstatic lately.
and a pretty decent drink lately. He
                                                                                                             He admired a
                                                                                                             brought
                        had
                                                                                                                                somebody
                        was forced to talk to somebody
                                                                                                annoying lately.
                              personal palace recently. He
by a wonderful creature in
                                                                                             admired own fine
vas comfor
Irink lately. He
Iv He admired
                                       formed a grudge recently. He
a fine tastefully arranged
                                                                                               ed Statue l
lately. He
took joy
                                                                                                                    lately.
    the rain recently. He
lately. He gave some
                                ently. He gave somebody water
gave somebody food lately. H
                                                                                                                He was nauseated
oy in slaughter
```

The Bronze Ages have started calling me "the Granite Strikes of Foot." I rather like that.

```
The Kills of 'Creiydrek' îdathel Lolokabod Nog
Five Kills
ûsbu Spidertrades the goblin, d. 511
Stâsost Monstercontained the goblin, d. 511
Olngö Fiendswallow the goblin, d. 511
Asno Monstrouslocked the goblin, d. 511
Nguslu Pisssin the goblin, d. 511
```

It may be lonely, but we at least have tranquility, food, drink, decent company, and the lack of any real need to do work. Once all the clean-up was finished, we realized how many supplies Battlefailed actually had, and being so few dwarves in a fortress meant for so many means we don't have to produce anything of our own for a very, very long time.

From here on out it's the good life.

```
A small mammalian carnivore. It is usually domestic and hunts vermin.

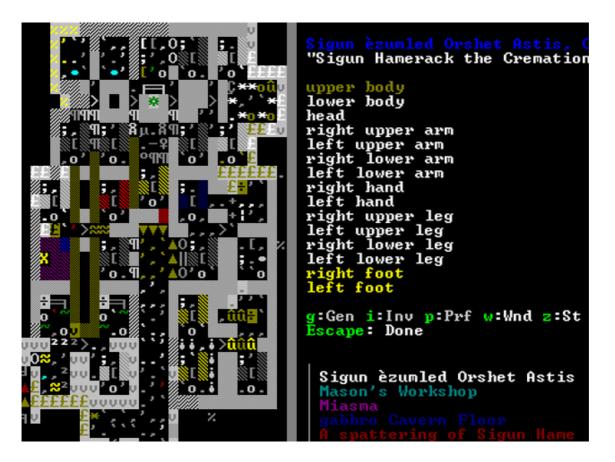
His right rear paw is rotten. His left front paw is rotten. His right front paw is rotten. His left rear paw is rotten.

He is gigantic. His hair is pumpkin. His ears are cinnamon. His tail is chocolate. His head is mahogany. His front paws are auburn. His rear paws are chestnut. His skin is brown. His eyes are dark tan.
```

Obsidian

Dastot Thizerib, Stray Cat (Tame) has succumbed to infection.

A cat was thankfully the only one to die this month.



Sigun was the first to show signs of the transformation.



Daetrin was the next to fall, presenting a far worse case.

Daetrin' Lokumanal has been quite content lately. She admired a completely subline Screw Pump lately. She admired a fine tastefully arranged Statue lately. She admired own fine Bed lately. She was caught in the rain recently. She was able to rest and recuperate lately. She had a nice bath recently. She has been satisfied at work lately. She was disgusted by a miasma lately. She sustained major injuries recently.

She is a faithful worshipper of Otik the Blueness of Flickers.

She is a faithful worshipper of Otik the Blueness of Flickers.

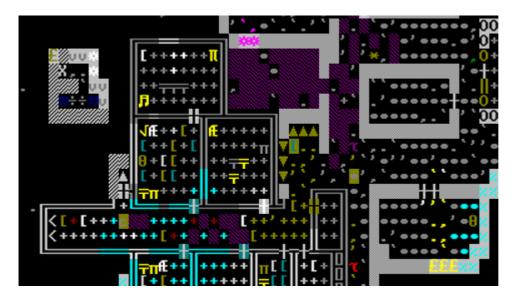
She is a sity-three years old, born on the 18th of Slate in the year 447.

She is sixty-three years old, born on the 18th of Slate in the year 447.

Her lover lip is rotten. Her mouth is rotten. Her left eyelid is rotten. Her left cheek is rotten. Her mouth is rotten. Her fifth toe, left foot is rotten. Her fourth toe, right foot is rotten. Her third toe, left foot is rotten. Her found toe, right foot is rotten. Her second toe, left foot is rotten. Her third toe right foot is rotten. Her first toe, left foot is rotten. Her first toe, right foot is rotten. Her found toe, right foot is rotten. Her first toe, right hand is rotten. Her thumb, right hand is rotten. Her thumb, left hand is rotten. Her right lover leg is rotten. Her left upper arm is rotten. Her hair is greasy. Her very long hair is arranged in double braids. She has a high-pitched, grating voice. Her somewhat broad head is somewhat short. She has very round chin. Her ears are fuse-lobed. Her nose bridge is concave. Her quite long eyebrows are high. Her gold eyes have thin irises.

It's finally happening. We're all going to die. And we won't even stay dead, if I'm right about it.

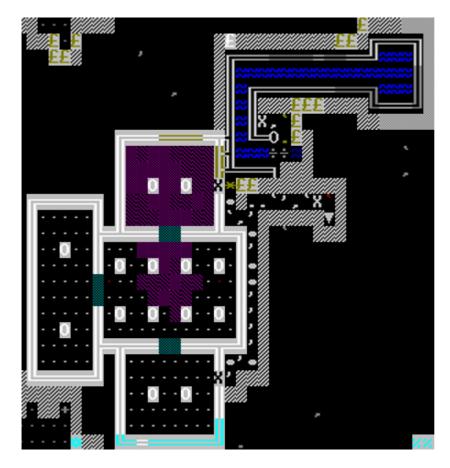
The Health	of 'Daetrin' Lo	kumamal, Appre	ntice	Mason		
46: Status	Wounds	Treatment	46:	Status		
Faint Vision lost Ability to stand lost Motor nerve damage	lower body, skin Advanced rot lower body, fat Advanced rot lower body, musc Advanced rot head, skin Advanced rot head, fat Advanced rot left upper arm,	cle skin fat	Need head Need left Need right Need right Need right Need right Need right Need	s surgery		
15th Opal, 511: 15th Opal, 511: Evalua 22rd Opal, 511: Cleand 18th Obsidian, 511:		Creiydrek'Creiydrek'Creiydrek'Lucus Cass	îdatl îdatl	hel Llkbd N hel Llkbd N	a. a.	Ovrsr Ovrsr



Slowly but surely we are turning to walking rags of necrotic flesh like those animals outside. The afflicted cannot rest, they cannot eat or drink or sleep; all they do from day to end is stare listlessly into space as their bodies drip away to the floor. There is nothing I can do for them.

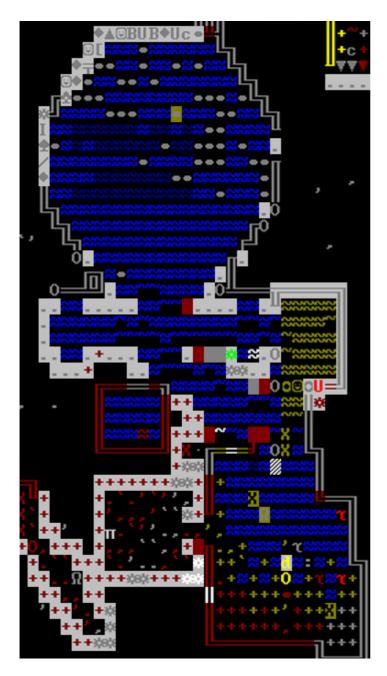
'Creiydrek' îdathel, Överseer cancels Surgery: Patient not resting.

I put a safeguard above the hospital in case our patients lose their selves and move against us. I pray to Okit we don't have to use it.

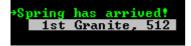


I'm certain that some dark force is behind this curse, but it doesn't matter now. All we can do now is wait by ourselves for the terrible death that will certainly come.

What could we have done to deserve such a fate?

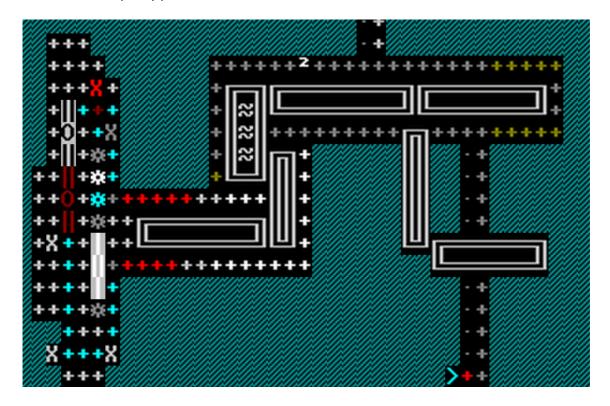


'Tis midnight on the morrow of Spring. Tomorrow I retire as overseer. Elections'll be held at some point. I'm going to bed now.





At the least, I hope my presence here has made a difference.



1st Granite, 512

To the next Overseer, bless your stout heart.

I don't envy your task, but a duty's a duty and your duty's sealed. The levers (the ones I'm aware of, anyway) have been marked and labeled if their function isn't obvious from their placement. Failcannon is neither complete or operational, but it's very nearly so. Either way you'll want to use it or something else to stop the ocean from running into our fort, whenever that feels right for you.

Please fill out the proper paperwork to ensure the bedrooms beneath my office are appropriated for my and Edzul's habitation. The Overseer's Mansion has been vacated for your use. I trust you'll enjoy the view from the office. Don't pull the levers in the west end of the hoard room. Any of them.

Sincerely yours,

Creiydrek Yearrings the Granite Stomps of Foot, Former Overseer

TURN 14 - PSIANO

Neural necrosis

Pisano's Log

1st Granite, 512

He must be mad turning the fortress over to me. Perhaps the necrosis has spread to his brain? A fine chronicler that Creiydrek was and he also seems to have pulled us out of a nosedive, at least somewhat. Despite the warnings about the numbing and necrotizing extracts I still see some dwarves insisting that nude is the only dwarven way. I just passed Kubuk Tiristmondul in the hallway, a fine axedwarf and wood cutter, wearing nothing but his axe and covered in that slime. Go wash yourself off already it isn't like we are lacking in water though I'm not sure how many of us want to get anywhere near that briney muck that is The Blueness of Malodors. Blueness my ass, more like a brownish red as is mixes around down here.



There are only 23 of us left 5 of which are care children and six of us are unconscious or otherwise unable to move from the hospital. A hospital which they share with the rotting corpses and skeletons of several former patients. The note Creiydrek left on my desk contained a bit of dry dwarven wit concerning the view from the Overseer's quarters, "I trust you'll enjoy the view from the office" he said.



Yes the hospital is in the mansion now and is smeared with blood, forgotten beast extract, sand, miasma and a few skeletons to boot. Or maybe he was talking about that masterful gem window with the view into the cavern.

After surveying some of the fortress I've come to the conclusion that we have many assets.

corpses [876] body parts [1334]

My first act as new overseer was to make sure that, despite his grim humor, Creiydrek was assigned his new quarters, complete with a lovely cow in a cage. Actually they are pretty fine quarters and now that I'm running the place I'll have to see about upgrading from my own modest quarters, but before that there are more pressing matters like this flood.

More to come when I've surveyed the landscape a bit more thoroughly and figured out what this FAILCANNON is supposed to do, it is some sort of very dwarven contraption, which, I think, will pump the water out upper and onto the field in front of the fortress to wash the blood and hopefully some of the invaders from outside of our front gate.

I guess by putting me in charge they decided it would force me to get off my lazy bum and do some work.

'Pisano' Tomêmoslan, Overseer On Break

Yeah, yeah, I'll get back to work soon. Before that though I must continue surveying the fortress to try and come to grips with what must be done here. The continuous flood is the greatest concern. As such I'm putting my efforts toward the completion operation FAILCANNON.

9th Granite, 512

I'm a bit worried about our wounded. Two of our most senior soldiers Sigun and Ezum have the foot rot and can't stand up anymore.

```
right foot, skin
Advanced rot
right foot, fat
Advanced rot
right foot, muscle
Advanced rot
Paralysis
right foot, bone
Advanced rot
left foot, skin
Advanced rot
left foot, fat
Advanced rot
left foot, muscle
Advanced rot
```

Meng Tholast is still on his feet, but has the foot rot as well. Daetrin has rot all over, it is a sad thing. Despite our previous overseer's instructions that everyone wear clothing many have already been infected. Dying due foot rot is an especially tragic way for the members of The Sword of Boots to go out. BOOTS wear boots, low boots, high boots, mining boots, at least some shoes!! Something please, if they are uncomfortable how about at least putting some socks on before trudging through all that forgotten beast slime?

Somehow despite the rot Sigun is quite happy. Perhaps being waited on hand and, dare I say, foot is better than the prospect of facing the dozens of goblins, trolls and other beasts that wait up top.



10th Granite, 512

Sigun èzumled Orshet Astis, Captain has succumbed to infection.

Not one day after I visited her in the hospital Sigun Hamerack, the Cremation of Dunes, has fallen to infection. One would have hoped that she could have fallen on the battlefield instead. At least she was happy to the end.

I've seen our doctor, Lucius Casius, repeatedly bathing the rot to no avail. I fear that once the rot has set in there is nothing we can do. There is just too much filth. I inspected Sigun's bed and this is the mess I found.

```
(fungiwood bucket)
(steel battle axe)
Sigun èzumled Orshet Astis's corpse
Bed
Miasma
—Detailed— granite Floor
A small pile of black sand
A smear of giant olm blood
A small pile of forgotten beast frozen extract
A smear of 'Krimson II' Drilledchanneled the Oar of St
A smear of forgotten beast extract
A spattering of Urist Boatclobbered's dwarf blood
A spattering of Fikod Boatscarnage the Rough Boredom of
A spattering of Obok Splatteredpalace's dwarf blood
A spattering of whire Salvelover's dwarf blood
```

Sigun spent her last happy hours in a pile of forgotten beast extract and other fluids. And what was an entire bag of black sand doing in the hospital. That just can't be sanitary. And the next day...

èzum Nomalonshen Kathililbåd, Bowyer has succumbed to infection.

12th Granite, 512

I've halted the construction of most of the nobles rooms, they are dug out, but seeing as we have no nobles the furniture placement and smoothing will have to wait for a bit.

Daetrin has taken a turn for the worse..

```
'Daetrin' Lokumamal, "Daetrin' Speartaught", Apprentice Mason

'Daetrin' Lokumamal has been quite content lately. She received food recently. She was rescued recently. She admired a completely sublime Screw Pump lately. She has been satisfied at work lately. She was caught in the rain recently. She was disgusted by a miasma lately. She sustained major injuries recently. She received water recently. She was able to rest and recuperate lately.

She is a faithful worshipper of Otik the Blueness of Flickers.

She is a citizen of The Sword of Boots. She is a member of The Oar of Ankles.

She is a sixty-four years old, born on the 18th of Slate in the year 447.

Her lower lip is rotten. Her right eyelid is rotten. Her left eyelid is rotten. Her left cheek is rotten. Her mouth is rotten. Her fifth toe, left foot is rotten. Her fourth toe, right foot is rotten. Her fourth toe, right foot is rotten. Her fourth toe, right foot is rotten. Her foot is rotten. Her foot the finger, right hand is rotten. Her foot is rotten. Her first toe, right foot is rotten. Her foot is rotten. Her first toe, right foot is rotten. Her foot hand is rotten. Her first toe, right foot is rotten. Her foot hand is rotten. Her thind is rotten. Her first finger, right hand is rotten. Her thind is rotten. Her thind is rotten. Her thind is rotten. Her right eye is rotten. Her right upper leg is rotten. Her right lower arm is rotten. Her left upper arm is rotten. Her head is rotten. Her lower body is rotten.
```

18th Granite, 512

Would that the doctor hadn't been right...

```
Daetrin, Lokumamal, Apprentice Mason has succumbed to infection.
```

Despite their orders nobody seems all that concerned with burying our fallen comrades or with finishing the FAILCANNON. This has not been a good month so far.

```
19th Granite, 512
Meng Tholast, Imcompetent Marksdwarf has succumbed to infection
```

sob

To try and cheer me up Ilmoran, placed a cow in a silver cage in my new quarters. Maybe he noticed that I always bring a sugar lump to Creiydrek's cow when I'm in the area. I didn't end up taking the

overseer's chambers. I took a more modest room that is still only half complete. It is a huge step up from my small cubicle, and, frankly with so few of us left we should all be living in large chambers.

25th Granite, 512

Kubuk is still walking around with nothing but his axe wearing nothing but a whole lot of ichor and secretions. Let's just say it isn't a pretty sight and leave it at that. As such I've ordered him to a new squad as an experiment. See sometimes these military types have taken one too many hammers to the noggin and they get it into their head that if they are ordered to wear nothing but steel armor and there isn't enough steel that, perhaps, it means that they shouldn't wear any normal clothing either. Not that there is anything wrong with wearing only metal armor, I mean people think it might chafe, but going dwarf commando is surprisingly comfortable. I myself am sporting nothing but iron armor and my fine bone leggings. It really lets the breeze in.

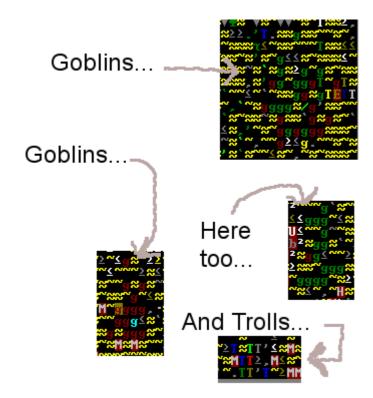
```
'Pisano' Tomêmoslan, Overseer
"'Pisano' Groupwound"

(iron shield), Right hand
(iron high boot), Right foot
(iron high boot), Left foot
steel mail shirt, Upper body
dog leather backpack, Upper body
silver flask, Steel mail shirt
\[
\text{\text{Ehorse bone leggings}}, \text{Hauled}
(steel battle axe), Left hand
(bismuth bronze helm), Head
```

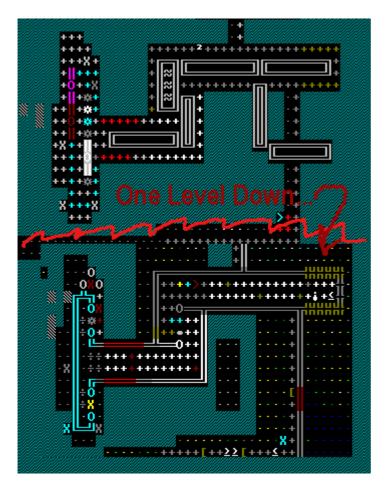
Regardless, you gotta wear metal, or cloth, or both, but running around buck naked is a sure way to get the foot rot. I feel like these are things I shouldn't have to explain to my fellow dwarves, but sometimes being the Overseer means repeating the obvious to your colleagues. Maybe there isn't enough steel available, I'll have to ask Nightmarebros our bookkeeper the next time I see him.

28th Granite, 512

A few moments spent staring through the fortifications was all it took to see that the goblin blighters haven't gone away. They have some trolls to, but luckily none seem large or smart enough to break down our drawbridge.



The FAILCANNON is complete, but... well fail seems to be the word of the day. I mean I didn't really pass my mechanics class in school... or many others, but I just don't see how the power was ever going to get from the three windmills to the screw pumps. I think the best alternative is to tell the masons and mechanics to take apart the wind mills, and build a small windmill towers for power. The idea of using water wheels in the vile blueness, as I like to call it, is not appetizing or rather we'd likely be appetizers for whatever is lurking beneath those waves.



1st Slate, 512

There are only 19 of us left. Well 19 if you count our two ghostly miners among the living. I feel that since our numbers have dwindled to so few I should do a quick medical roll call before letting everyone get back to work.

The 5 remaining children are Asmel, Obok, Urist, Edzul the Child Menace, and Likot. They are all orphans, but three are brothers. I can never keep them straight; I mean children don't have beards so they all look the same to me.

- Asmel, has numb feet but no signs of rot yet. She is in the hospital.
- Obok, has numb feet also with no signs of rot, at least not yet...
- Likot, again, has numb feet with no signs of rot.
- Urist and Edzul, healthy!

Of the 12 remaining adults these folks need medical attention:

- Dishmab the Murderer, has a minor upper body wound that has gotten infected. He was examined by Lucus about a week ago, so perhaps he will be okay. Dishmab is wearing no clothing.
- Fikod, Miner and Axe Dwarf, is wearing no clothing and has numb feet with partial paralysis. Lucus excised some rotten tissue from his left foot not 3 days ago.
- Inod, Carpenter, is lying nude in the hospital with an infection in his right leg and a right arm that needs someone to look at it.

These adults are healthy and clothed (except where noted):

- Creiydrek, Former Overseer and Engraver
- Eral, Blacksmith
- Lucus Casius, chief medical dwarf
- Nightmarebros, bookkeeper
- Kubuk, Axe Dwarf, generally wears nothing but his axe, but he recently picked up a spider silk hood that makes him look all the more ridiculous. Despite running around in the he appears to be healthy.
- Pisano, current overseer, clothed, but my feet have recently started to stiffen up like Fikod's. That might just be the result of some surgery that Creidrek did on my last Opal.
- Twobeard, our fine mayor, in ratty clothing and has a minor irritation on his lower stomach. I think he has just gotten too fat and his belt is pinching.
- Zon, Swordmaster and Militia Commander
- Ilmoran, Legendary Mason, is wearing some incredibly raggedy clothing that, honestly, looks like it is going to fall off of him any day now. I want to tell him to get some new clothing, but I'm not sure how to broach the subject.

```
'Ilmoran' Amtulon, Legendary Mason
"'Ilmoran' Yawningroads"

XX(mule leather trousers)XX, Lower body
XX(pig tail fiber dress)XX, Upper body
XX(pig tail fiber coat)XX, Upper body
XX(pig tail fiber cloak)XX, Upper body
XX(pig tail fiber cap)XX, Head
XX(cave spider silk hood)XX, Head
XX(cat leather left glove)XX, Left hand
XX(pig tail fiber left mitten)XX, Left hand
XX(pig tail fiber right mitten)XX, Right hand
XX(pig tail fiber right mitten)XX, Right hand
XX(giant cave spider silk sock)XX, Left foot
XX(giant cave spider silk sock)XX, Right foot
XX(pig tail fiber shoe)XX, Right foot
XX(pig tail fiber shoe)XX, Right foot
Emicrocline table = Hauled
```

So three of the children and three of the adults need medical attention and nine who can still work though some have partial paralysis.

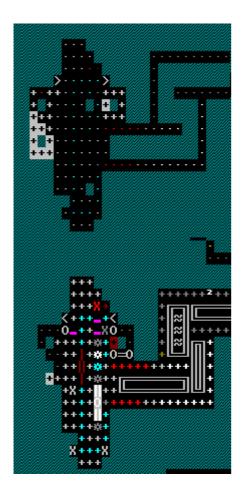
What this tells me is that we need a second doctor. Creidrek volunteered so I took him off of his hauling duties in hopes that we can save some of the wounded. I'm also going to see about making some soap. We must have the ingredients around here though I doubt we have anyone skilled in such a profession anymore. It should also be noted that for the most part folks who have footwear on don't have the rot.

15th Slate, 512

I've forbidden anyone from touching anything that is not a construction item outside of Battlefailed. I am all for being tidy, but we have matters more pressing that sorting out dead troll bits and goblin armor. I also formed up a new military squad, the Harmonius Anvils, whose uniform includes shoes and socks and any available metal armor. I lead this squad myself though I have no intention of ever taking us into battle.

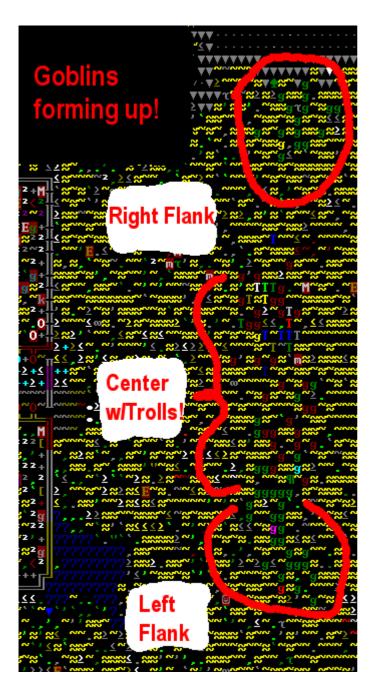
25th Slate, 512

Some progress on the windmill towers at the top of the FAILCANNON.



2nd Felsite

Hmm, are the gobbos up to something?



It sure seems like they would have attacked log ago if they thought they could breach our defenses. They have been killing off the local fauna for the last few months, but little else.

8th Felsite

```
Mandates: Make green glass items (1/1)
```

The mandate to not export adamantine items ended and a new mandate was issued. Perhaps Twobeards wants to see us recultivate lost skills with this one. There isnt' a dwarf among us who knows a lick about glass making. I just hope they don't burn off a limb in the magma glass furnace or something.

→The Dwarven child Urist Koganavéd has organized a party at granite Statue. Really, we're letting a three year old organize a party? This one is a future mayoral candidate if she lives that long.

A few hours later...

I guess it wasn't that great a party. I heard later that nobody but Urist showed up. I guess we are all too busy and if you are too busy for a party with a three-year-old, well, I guess that says something about us now doesn't it?

16th Felsite

Despite my suggestion Fikod that he is on the hook for producing a green glass item, he doesn't seem all that inclined to do so. He keep muttering that he have no idea how to make glass items. I handed him an instruction manual and told him he'd could temporarily stop hauling if he got to it.

18th Felsite

They are gone! The invaders have left us.

We now have a thief stealing valuables from outside of the gate, but frankly unlesss I see a trade caravan or some migrants I'm not inclined to open the gates for anything.

```
A thief has stolen a ((***giant cave spider silk loincloth****)!

A thief has stolen a ((=**cave spider silk hood)=})!

A thief has stolen a ((***-iron harp-)**)!
```

23 Felsite, 512

Kobold vermin and goblins are practicing their hunting skills on the skeletal horses. Would that I had a few fine lads in tempered steel, I'd send them out to end those runty wretches.

24 Felsite, 512

Only one patient remains in the hospital, the child Obok. I think some of the others are checking themselves in periodically though still, perhaps returning on doctors orders for a check up.

Fikod finished the green glass window. Green glass is one of Twobeard's favorites so I'm going to have it installed in his office.

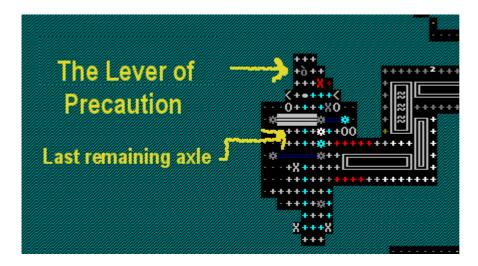


1st Hematite, 512

I've had to start up the booze production again. Somehow our stocks have dwindled. I can't imagine 20 or so dwarves drinking almost 500 bottles of beer in 3 months. All I can think of is that with the flood we've been cut off from a significant portion of our booze sockpile.

15th Hematite, 512

The FAILCANNON may be ready any day now. I believe one more axle is all that is necessary to start it. I've taken the precaution of hooking a couple of the gears up to The Lever of Precaution which I've placed right by the FAILCANNON.



19th Hematite, 512

The fortress attracted no migrants this season.

26th Hematite, 512

The FAILCANNON is active.. and failing. There is no power to the two topmost pumps which I missed when I consulted the schematics. Shortly after the FAILCANNON started pumping I realized it was flooding the ground level. Argh! I guess gear's aren't watertight afterall. I can't believe I trusted

them. These are the designs that he so-called mechanics came up with?! Now is when that lever will come in handy, let's hope the mechanic's at least hooked that up right.



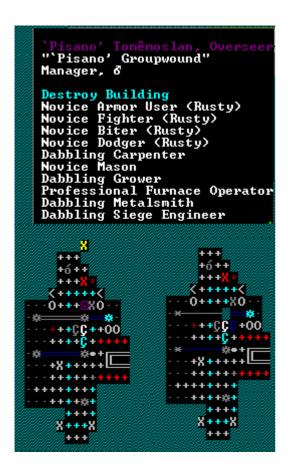
Maybe the water will wash away some of the filth outside of the FAILCANNON at least...but if the lever doesn't work we might flood the rest of the fortress.

5th Malachite, 512

Yeah, the Lever of Precaution, my brainchild, only disabled one of the gears. One pump is still pouring water onto the ground. And despite my pleading, still nobody will remove the gear that will disable the failcannon.

7th Malachite, 512

If you want something done right you have to do it yourself....



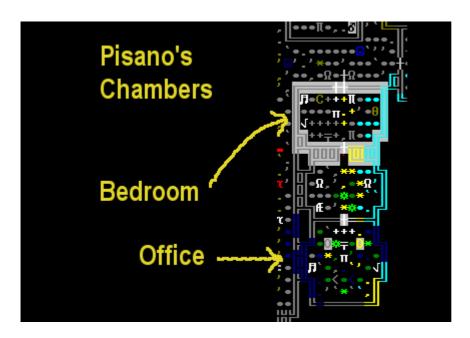
On the plus side we didn't flood anything and we did manage to wash away some grime from the beach.

25th Malachite, 512

After a few slight modifications to the design, mainly with how it is powered, construction on the FAILCANNON will now continue.

2nd Galena, 512

Today is my birthday. Knowing how much I like silver, and owing to the fact that we had over 150 silver bars, the boys whipped up a few silver ornaments for me and placed them all around my room. I can't believe it, it is so wonderful to have silver all over my room. Thanks guys!



12th Galena, 512

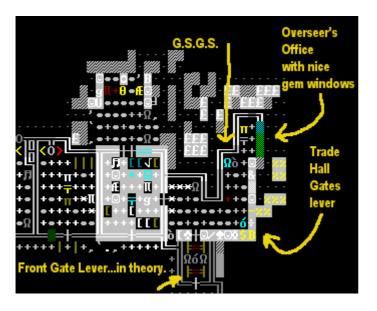
Hurray, a human caravan has arrived... and an odd diplomat as well. Now if I can just find the lever to open the front gate.

The human Animal Dissector Ote Rorkekturot from Gil Thinir has arrived. →A human caravan from Gil Thinir has arrived.

I know I saw it around here somewhere.

13th Galena, 512

I pulled the lever marked, "astonishingly this controls the front gate." And nothing happened...



Front gate lever, the one marked, "astonishingly..." I was astonished more by the fact that despite being flanked by statues in the image of dwarves it didn't seem to work.

Trade Hall gates lever, I pulled this just to see what would happen (what could possibly go wrong?) and damn if I can tell what happened. I do see two silver bridges next to the trade depot, but it looks like a wagon can get through there, both before and after I pulled this lever. I mean if the front gate were open then a wagon could get through to the trade depot.

The G.S.G.S. lever has the cryptic note: This lever controls the gates for the lever controlling the main gate. As far as I can tell there are no gates to the main gate lever and if there were you wouldn't be able to get into this room to pull this lever. Maybe the main gate and the front gate are different things?

14th Galena, 512

A ghost whispered in my ear that the main gate lever had been deconstructed. So I asked Creiydrek and he said that, as part of a beautification project, he had the lever rebuilt, but that it hadn't been hooked back up again. So I ordered that it be hooked up again. Luckily our front bridge/gate is made of rutile and we have no other rutile bridges in the whole place. This should be easy for the mechanics.

15th Galena, 512

The mechanics tell me they can't find a rutile bridge anywhere that isn't already hooked up. So we must have a lever somewhere, but where? I found the levers that control the cistern and crop irrigation.

I'm contemplating removing the bridge, rebuilding it and hooking up the front gate lever, but that would leave us vulnerable for however long it takes to construct a fine new draw bridge.

The humans dispatched a goblin thief and then were ambushed by some bowmen who they chased off.

17th Galena, 512

The front gate lever just looked so nice that I pulled it again to see if something different would happen and wouldn't you know the main gates opened! However, the humans aren't making their way to the gates. For some reason that I cannot fathom access down the remaining ramp way is blocked. Only thing I see that could be blocking are a sapling, a dead shrub or a floor grate. I don't see how any of those things could stop a wagon.



19th Galena, 512

I've asked the masons to build a floor over that sapling and to seal up a breach which would allow flying beasties from the cavern to enter the fortress. Through the crack I could see Nagnod, some sort of gigantic blob of water with two stubby but undulating tails. It seemed to be hovering there so maybe it can fly but can't get through the small crack. The last thing we need right now is another forgotten beast wandering the halls.

I also ordered the construction of an trade depot up top, but inside our gates, as a temporary measure.

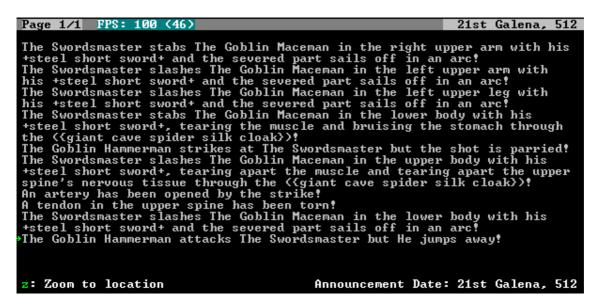
20th Galena, 512

The humans caravan is making its way inside, hurray! Maybe they will find their way down to the main trade depot after all?

But then, of course...

An ambush! Curse them!

Goblins are ambushing the back of the caravan. Zon had taken it upon himself to be stationed inside the gates for just such trouble. The humans guards should get there first, but Zon insisted on going to help, it is only a half a dozen or so of the foul greenskins he said. I haven't seen him look so happy in quite a long time.



Zon really enjoyed himself! Goblin limbs were sailing off left and right. He is a regular Cuisinart.

```
The Goblin Hammerman looks surprised by the ferocity of The Swordsmaster's onslaught!
The Swordsmaster slashes The Goblin Hammerman in the left upper leg from behind with his *steel short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Swordsmaster collides with The Goblin Hammerman!
The Goblin Hammerman is knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Swordsmaster slashes The Goblin Hammerman in the right lower arm from behind with his *steel short sword* and the severed part sails off in an *arc!
The Swordsmaster slashes The Goblin Hammerman in the right upper arm from behind with his *steel short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Swordsmaster stabs The Goblin Hammerman in the upper body from behind with his *steel short sword*, tearing the muscle through the ({cave spider silk cloak})!
An artery has been opened by the strike!
The *steel short sword* has lodged firmly in the wound!
The Swordsmaster twists the embedded *steel short sword* around in The Goblin Hammerman's upper body!

Z: Zoom to location

Announcement Date: 21st Galena, 512
```

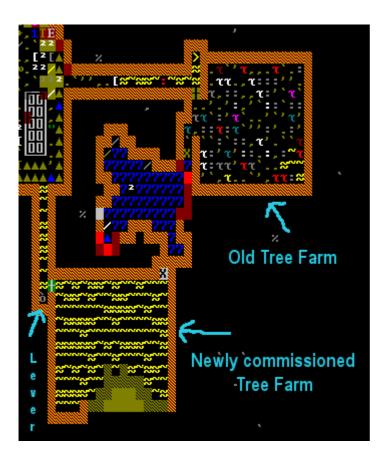
21st Galena, 512

Oh, what a rousing sight! When it was all over Zon notched 5 more kills with one of the greenskins fleeing before she could catch up. The humans guards were not much help, I think when they saw Zon trundling along they just went inside with the lead wagon.

```
Båx Dreadfulgross the goblin, d. 507
Zolak Ownsteal the goblin, d. 507
the troll, d. 508
Ozud Tormentdented the goblin, d. 509
Ago Hellfats the goblin, d. 509
Arstruk Weaverterror the goblin, d. 509
Nguslu Fiendfroth the goblin, d. 509
Ståsost Nourisheddread the goblin, d. 509
Scourgecackled the troll, d. 509
Osnun Pageplagues the goblin, d. 509
Zom Hairyfly the goblin, d. 509
Tode Wraithshut the goblin, d. 510
Ngebzo Demoncrawl the goblin, d. 510
Asno Carriedmenaced the goblin, d. 510
Snodub Malignedtraps the goblin, d. 510
Frurus the kobold, d. 510
Smunstu Malicebinds the goblin, d. 510
Utes Cunningthieves the goblin, d. 510
Utes Bounddread the goblin, d. 510
Atír Relicguard the dwarf, d. 510
Ber Spideryshakes the goblin, d. 511
Utes Brandedincest the goblin, d. 511
Estrur Demonstoke the goblin, d. 512
Båx Incestsad the goblin, d. 512
Strodno Chunkwraith the goblin, d. 512
Strodno Chunkwraith the goblin, d. 512
Thirteen Other Kills
```

22nd Galena, 512

Since we are desperately low on wood I've commissioned another tree farm up top.



This is a long term investment however, hopefully the traders will have some wood for us.

23 Galena, 512

oh no! With the gates open and my discussion of needing wood Kubuk and Inod have taken it upon themselves to go and cut down some trees. I was certain I had rescinded all outer world wood chopper certificates (designations), but I realize now that I never had a chance to tour that hole to the north. Sure enough there were some wood chopper certificates at the bottom of a stack of paperwork I haven't gotten to. They are rescinded and properly stamped in triplicate with the diorite seal, the alabaster seal, and silver seal, but Inod and Kubuk are already on their way down.

Somehow the merchants have found their way down to the trade depot, I guess we won't be needing the temporary depot after all.

End of Galena

Kubuk and Inod made it back safely. I couldn't believe my eyes when they walked back through that gate. I also promptly ordered it shut as soon as I had word they were inside.

We're all anxiously waiting for the traders to finish unloading. The first six months of this year could have gone far far worse, other than those we lost the first month we've had no causalities. But our progress on the FAILCANNON has been mostly a failure thus far.

Autum has come...

5th Limestone, 512

The first round of trading went well. We managed to trade away a few rock crafts, and a lot of random bits of clothing for a pile of booze, seeds, and food that we desperately needed. I also traded for three dog cages. It seems like our dog populate was wiped out at some point in the past and I miss the little guys. I need to have a few more items moved to the trade depot before we can liberate ^H^HHrade for a few metal bars and maybe some more livestock.

After chasing Twobeard around for a few days the human animal dissector finally managed to get a meeting with him.

```
The Dungeon KFPS: 117 (41)rd' Rigòthbelal meets with the human Animal Dissector Ote Rorkekturot
Ote Rorkekturot: I am your liaison from the Mountainhomes. Let's discuss your situation.
```

10th Limestone, 512

The second round of trading was a success. We have obtained everything we wanted from the traders.

13th Limestone, 512

The merchants have embarked on their journey. Safe travels!

16th Limestone, 512

Twobeards met again with the strange human Ote Rorekturot. It was a long meeting but Twobeards hasn't said what they discussed. I did notice a case of whip wine, that we just traded for, is missing. That Twobeards is a sneaky guy. I can only hope that our generous trading with the humans will bring them around this way again next year.

17th Limestone, 512

Another "meeting" today. Twobeards relayed the message this time:

```
Ote Rorkekturot: Farewell. 'Twobeard' Rigòthbelal. I look forward to our meeting next year. Our fortunes rise and fall together.
```

Ugh, I opened the gates to let the trade caravan out and folks started leaving. First the blacksmith who was on break, and then two of the children decided to go on walkabout outside the gate. I tried to tell them how unsafe the place is, but after being cooped up in here for months I guess they just had to stretch their legs.

Eral has come back but now Fikod is touring the countryside and Inod declared that she was going to go out and gather some plants down in that hole to the north.. that place is a real danger. I thought I had ripped up all plant gathering certificates for areas outside of the fortress, so I don't know where she thinks she is going. Don't they know it is dangerous!



I don't really remember poor Sethrist, but Inod found his broken body, or what was left of it.

19th Limestone, 512

I've turned on the FAILCANNON again. It will work this time, really.. I mean what could possibly go wrong?

21st Limestone, 512

Rab save me! You'd think that everyone wants to leave this place or something. Inod safely made it back once again defying the odds and now Dishmab has decided to collect webs from guess where... yeah that stinking hole. I should have bricked up myself ages ago except that I have enough sense to stay inside the gates!

23rd Limestone, 512

Rab be praised! The humans are gone and everyone is back inside safe and sound. Unbelievable.

On the other hand guess what doesn't work right? Yeah the FAILCANNON. See it turns out the pumps weren't built with space to allow for their gears to connect up to the pumps below them, so the bottom two levels of pumps are getting no power. Fine dwarven engineering I tell you. Its okay I've asked for a couple of walls to be removed and then we'll get some burly dwarves to man two of the pumps until we clear some of the water out. This is the never ending project.

26th Limestone, 512

I guess I was a bit louder than I meant to be with that last round of shouting about how far behind we are on the FAILCANNON schedule. Even the children are pitching in at this point.

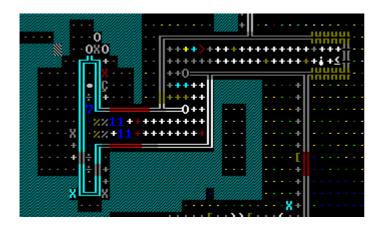


5th Sandstone

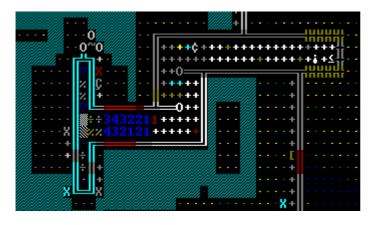
Twobeard has mandated the construction of three traction benches and, of course, we have no chains in stock. I've given orders for three to be constructed, but it is unclear if we will get to that in short order. Traction benches are not what we need right now.

10th Sandstone

Kubek answered the call to come pumping and we had a tiny splash of water from the FAILCANNON go in the right direction.



Who can tell me how this is going to end?



18th Sandstone

```
The forgotten beast Buqui Inutkom has come! A great eyeless salamander. It has three short tails and it appears to be emaciated. Its emerald skin is warty. Beware its deadly dust!

Press Enter to close window
```

Yay something to keep Nagnod company. Let's just hope this one isn't smart enough to find a way in either, and yes I'm reasonably sure I didn't fix them all. We have miles of caves and whoever did the coffin in the stairwell retrofit left a lot of holes it seems.

23rd Sandstone, 512

The fortress attracted no migrants this season.

27th Sandstone, 512

I noticed Zon was hauling a skeleton of one of our fallen comrades away to a newly reopened portion of the fort. It was a ghastly sight, a pile of corpses none of which had been given a proper burial with some even tossed on top of coffins.

16th Timber, 512

A caravan from Dastot Cog has arrived.

and was promptly ambushed by a half a dozen goblin spearmen. When the militia (of one) gets up top I'll send him out.

18th Timber, 512

And a second ambush... there may be too many for the caravan guards.

19th Timber, 512

Two axe dwarves, a hammer dwarf, and two spear dwarves slew one group of the ambushers, but the other group has killed many of the traders. Evidently this made a donkey sad and more alarmingly drove one of the other traders insane with rage. I'm not sure I want to let them in until that guy calms down a bit.

```
An ambush! Curse them!
The dwarves suspended the construction of Wall.
Dôbar Uzolmosus, Merchant has gone stark raving mad!
Donkey is stricken by melancholy!
Obok Volaldodók, Merchant has gone berserk!
```

Donkey Stricken by melancholy..., & Sad little donkey, it's okay little fella.

Zon sallied forth solo once again. He is quite fleet of foot, but the dwarves were all but lost by the time he made it to the fight. One axe dwarf in a martial trance remained, but he was badly wounded. Zon slipped into the fray with his usual gusto...

```
The Swordsmaster slashes The Goblin Wrestler in the left upper leg with his *steel short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc! The Goblin Lasher misses The Swordsmaster! The Swordsmaster stabs The Goblin Wrestler in the lower lip with his *steel short sword*, tearing apart the muscle through the (<cougar leather cloak)! The *steel short sword* has lodged firmly in the wound! The Swordsmaster twists the embedded *steel short sword* around in The Goblin Wrestler's lower lip! The Swordsmaster slashes The Goblin Wrestler in the upper body with his *steel short sword*, tearing apart the muscle and tearing apart the liver *through the (<cougar leather cloak))!
```

eww, in the lower lip!

```
The Swordsmaster stabs The Goblin Wrestler in the upper body with his *steel short sword*, tearing apart the muscle and shattering the left true rib through the ({cougar leather cloak})!

A tendon in the left true rib has been torn!

The *steel short sword* has lodged firmly in the wound!

The Goblin Axeman strikes at The Swordsmaster but the shot is parried!

The Swordsmaster twists the embedded *steel short sword* around in The Goblin Wrestler's upper body!

The Goblin Axeman strikes at The Swordsmaster but the shot is parried!

The Goblin Axeman strikes at The Swordsmaster but the shot is parried!

The Goblin Axeman strikes at The Swordsmaster but the shot is parried!

The Swordsmaster counterstrikes!

The Swordsmaster counterstrikes!

The Swordsmaster slashes The Goblin Axeman in the right lower arm with his *steel short sword*, shattering the bone and shattering the right elbow's bone through the ({cave spider silk cloak})!
```

A small herd of skeletal muskoxen chose that time to join the fray. Zon is badly outnumbered! The order to fall back had been given, but such orders are often ignored in the heat of battle and a fleeing goblin led him right into the undead quadrapeds.

The muskoxen are indiscriminate in their attacks aiming blows at goblin and dwarf alike. A martial trance kept Zon safe and even after it was over he slew one skeletal muskox and two zombie muskoxen. Amazingly he then chased the rest from the field before returning to the safety of the gates... unscathed.

By now you, the readers of this chronicle, may be sick of hearing how Zon sliced yet another limb off. This is for you.

```
The Swordsmaster slashes The Zombie Muskox in the lower body with his +steel short sword+ and the severed part sails off in an arc! The Swordsmaster slashes The Zombie Muskox in the lower body with his +steel short sword+ and the severed part sails off in an arc! The Swordsmaster slashes The Zombie Muskox in the upper body with his +steel short sword+, tearing apart the fat and tearing apart the heart! The +steel short sword+ has lodged firmly in the wound! The Swordsmaster twists the embedded +steel short sword+ around in The Zombie Muskox's upper body! The Swordsmaster stabs The Zombie Muskox in the right front leg with his +steel short sword+, chipping the bone! A tendon has been torn!

The Swordsmaster slashes The Zombie Muskox in the left front leg with his +steel short sword+, fracturing the bone! A motor nerve has been severed and a tendon has been torn!

The Swordsmaster slashes The Zombie Muskox in the left front leg with his +steel short sword+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!
```

Ha. Yeah Zon sliced through those muskox like they were made of butter, and to think I was a bit worried about him. Would that I had ten more lad like that one. Or ten more lads of any type really...

21st Timber, 512

The fighting is over, but sadly the dwarven trade caravan is all but wiped out. The insane merchant is still running around babbling with his donkey and the moans coming from the last axedwarf have stopped signifying his last gasp. May the mighty Rab embrace him into the earth.

28th Timber, 512

I had minor success sealing off part of the flooded area. It is hard to get enough folks to man the pumps, but I managed to get half of the FAILCANNON to limp along for a short while which was enough to seal off one area. Unfortunately the larger and more important area is still not sealed off.

3rd Moonstone, 512

Ah Winter.. Urist the child has organized a party to celebrate the beginning of winter. I told the workforce that they could take a break. We've been working non-stop for the last nine months, so I figured it was time to a little bit. I mean sure there are still dozens of corpses lying about and of course there are pools of blood and excretions from beasts I've forgotten all over the place, why not TAKE A BREAK AND PARTY???. And, of course, party time means that progress on pretty much everything has ground to a halt.

14th Moonstone, 512

```
The merchants from Dastot Cog will be leaving soon.
```

What this really means is that the lone surviving crazy babbling merchant will be leaving soon...

```
Dôbar Uzolmosus, Merchant
"Dôbar Oilyrooms"
Running around babbling!, $
```

and his little donkey too...

```
Donkey
Stricken by melancholy.... &
```

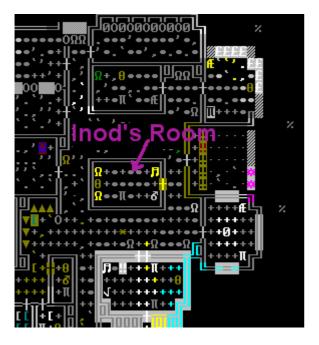
20th Moonstone, 512

I commissioned and had installed 10 fine green glass windows for the overseer's office. I hope the next to use this office will enjoy them. Nightmarebros seems to be getting the hang of this glass making thing. At least he doesn't look like he is going to burn a hand off every time he goes near the magma glass furnace anymore.

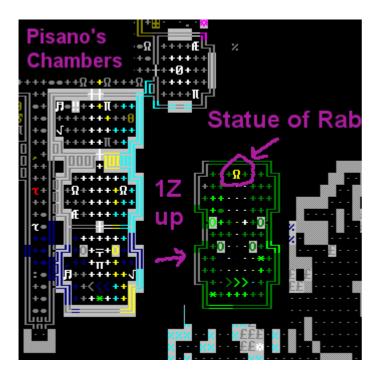


1st Opal, 512

Inod was looking a little down and I know she has a penchant for Electrum. I checked the stock log and we had some electrum bars so I asked Eral on the down low to make a new door, a couple of statuse and an armor stand for her quarters.



I also took the liberty of rewarding myself a bit. Since I went to the trouble of smelting those 150+ bars of silver, I might as well line my office, bedroom, and tomb with silver items and flooring. I deserve it.

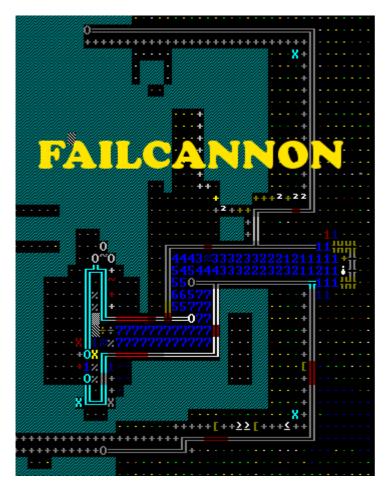


21nd Opal, 512

A few last modifications have been made to the FAILCANNON. The top four pumps all operate on windmill power. The bottom two z-levels of our fair cannon still must be dwarf powered.

22nd Opal, 512

The FAILCANNON is operational, well the southmost pumps are and that was sufficient to seal up one of the breaches.





Now to try and seal the other one. Twobeards just told me that I'd be replaced we don't get this fixed before the end of the year! There is little time left, we'll never make it!

And that little brat Likot has decided to thrown a party...this time only the children were invited so the workforce remains intact. I think they did this so they could drink all the sewer brew without adult supervision. Those incorrigible lads and lasses.

25th Opal, 512

Tragedy has struck.... right as Dishmab was about to put the final door in place one of our pump operators decided to take a break and a jet of water flushed her into the watery abyss... I don't know if she can get out.



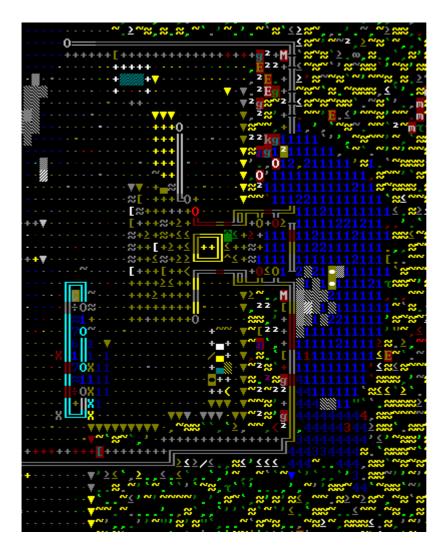
Guess that answers that.

26th Opal, 512

With the death of Dishmab Twobeards has told me that I have until the end of next month to clear up any outstanding paperwork and hand over the keys to the overseer's office. I will miss the scintillating gem windows.

27th Opal, 512

The cleverly carved crenelations north of the main gate serve as an inlet for some the FAILCANNONS water.

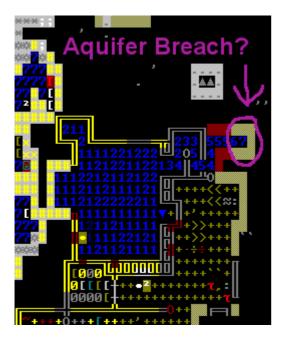


6th Obsidian, 512

It is complete! The second breach has been sealed.

14th Obsidian, 512

While we've stopped the ocean from streaming in, it appears that there is an aquifer breach as well.



25th Obsidian, 512

The work to repair the cistern is almost complete, which is good because the water levels for the well are getting a little low. At least I think that is how it gets filled up. I was told by my predecessor to not pull any of the cistern levers, so I have left them alone. I can see signs of where a flood went down the main ramp way and I should have them all patched up any day now.

Also of note, the top levels are draining out even with the aquifer breach. I leave it to my successor to deal with that little problem.



TURN 15 - ZATHEL

Journal of Eral "Tareon" Ushatosor Skull blocks for the skull throne totem!

23rd Obsidian 512

I have notices something... strange about some of the filth plaguing Battlefailed. I heard that Doctor Solonarros identified that one of the forgotten beast's excretions was responsible for that dreadful skin rot we've lost some people to this Granite, and that must be it.

See, it has some strange properties, apart from the now well known very gruesome effect on living flesh. I'm not really sure what exactly they are but... I will find out. Not that there's much more to do with the flooding of upper Battlefailed contained, thanks to the pump system the previous Overseer, whatever his name was, designed.

29th Obsidian 512

So, Mayor Twobeard Rigothbelal think I'm the man for the job of overseeing Battlefailed next year. I don't think I've even spoken to him before, but who am I to question him? I guess I'll have to try. Maybe my dear Illie and Deggie will rest easier knowing that I did my best to help our home... and their final resting place.

Also, I think I'm nearing a breakthrough on that extract. It certainly seems to influence organic material, without getting into reaction with it. I'll be borrowing a forge in the magmaworks to test out some theories I developed.

3rd Granite 513

THAT'S IT! I got it!

I got my hands on books one of the previous Overseers, Bookmaster Ottanlimul, brought with him from Mountainhomes. Along bureaucratic dredge there was hidden a report on some of the more arcane practices of the humans from Gil Thinir. It helped me greatly with achieving a breakthrough. In the honor of this Overseer, even if I heard he had an adamantium stick up his bureacratic ass, I'll name the substance I isolated from the slime "Zathelite".

Zathelite is a powerful catalyst. It allows binding and hardening of bones so that they have hardness and overall strength of metal or hard rock. Reaction requires high temperatures, provided by magma kilns, and a dose of clotted blood... which we have in abundance. As a catalyst, its completely reusable, so we won't have to worry about getting more than I already isolated.

I've been going around the fortress, asking my compatriots about many things. After hearing about my invention, someone threw out an idea to construct a huge totem above the drainage system... out of bone. It was met with general approval. I have to say I agree, though. It will serve as a deterrent. Maybe, after it's done, goblins will leave us alone. If not... the second demand that was made will take care of them.

After completing the totem, I will do my best to construct a huge power generator, using another of Zathel's manuals. It will be then used to power a huge pump stack that will utilize the drainage system outlet to pour magma on anyone stupid enough to bother our home.

13th Granite 513

I don't know who though that fortifications of ground level of the surface were a good idea, but I ordered them sealed. When the magma Device will be complete, we won't want hot fiery death flooding our courtyard.

According to plans, there should be an additional floodgate near the reservoir that was reserved for

"future projects". I have found none. No documents involving it's deconstruction too. There goes my plan to supply the reactor this way. On top of it, the crazy obsidianizing operation carried out by one of the Overseers rendered the usual water supply completely useless. Unless I make it work again.

I have also ordered construction of additional kilns. We'll need them.

23rd Granite 513

Creiydrek finished first bone... block. Ugly, misshapen mess of muskox bone. It will serve perfectly.

I'm having trouble with getting people to work. Especially Fikod. Mine you fool, we need to snap out of this stagnation, and we need some digging to do that!

4th Slate 513

Surprisingly, some migrants arrived. Novice siege operator, high master butcher who, as he said, knows how to handle himself in a fight, Mountainhome University Architecture Department dropout, a bowyer, skilled ranger, a farmer, master carpenter, a thresher who used to serve in the army, a fish dissector and, for a lack of better term, a thug. Ten dwarves in total. Much needed addition to our little community. They got a taste of what's life in Battlefailed is like. Got chased by an undead groundhog just before reaching the gates.

Some stray dog got locked out. Mutt snuck out just before the gate slammed close. It won't be missed. Hell, it might even survive until we have a good reason to open the gates. Stranger things happened.

28th Slate 513

After a month of hard digging, Fikod returned from the caverns, drenched head to toe, wearing only his pick and the biggest smile I've seen in Battlefailed, ever.

```
Fikod Koganilush Dumatedod Egom has been ecstatic lately. He had a pretty decent drink lately. He had a wonderful drink lately. He had a nice bath recently. He had a fine drink lately. He was comforted by a lovely waterfall lately. He admired a fine Paved Road lately. He admired a fine tastefully arranged Seat lately. He was comforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He was caught in the rain recently. He was able to rest and recuperate lately. He has been satisfied at work lately.
```

This solves the water problem.

9th Felsite 513

Work is slow, but steady. I just hope this mad idea for a "reactor" works, to bring magma up to surface we'll need a lot of power.

I also noticed that we don't have any ore ready to process. Once our two miners are done with digging out the reactor, I'll send them out to mine some iron, marble and coal. I have a feeling we'll need it.

13th Felsite 513

I heard that the dog that got locked out was butchered by kobolds today. Oh well.

19th Felsite 513

One of the elves got mauled by muskoxen before militia could rush up top. You'd think they'd learn to send guards with their caravans by now.

And they brought next to nothing too. A few barrels of alcohol, that's it. Not even one log of wood. And we'll need lots of wood if we hope to build that reactor. At least Avuz, whom I forced into trading, got some practice in appraising. I hope humans will bring something better. Or anything useful at all.

10th Hematite 513

We've struck fresh veins of iron ore and coal, we also know where to mine marble. I'd rather not touch anything in the old fortress, we've had luck so far, I'd rather not risk changing it.

Zathel's note:

I swear these fuckers have a death wish. All of them. I couldn't do shit for over a month because I was busy watching the front gate and waiting for a good moment to close without locking one idiot or another out of the fortress. So frustrating. Even more so that I remembered I can just force them to move inside using a burrow after that lost month. Go me. And even after I ordered them inside via alert, it took forever to actually get to the point where I could pull the damned lever. I don't understand why the animals won't just fucking stay in the dining room, like they do in all my other forts.

22nd Malachite 513

I'm not cut out for this job. I'll just play along with Mayor Twobeard till the end of the year, ensure there are bone blocks ready for whomever wants to pick up that totem business, and generally make things as comfortable for everyone as possible. Speaking of which, I noticed we don't have enough barrels. Or booze. I need to hunt down whomever is responsible for this.

14th Galena 513

Pumps for the reactor are complete. Now it only needs water and water wheels. Now I can put my full attention to building that totem the dwarves convinced me to construct after all.

18th Galena 513

Human caravan arrived, only to be set upon by a huge band of goblins. I was unsure if I should open the gates, but humans are good in a fight. Soon all the goblins were dead, with only a few wounded on the caravan side, as far as I've seen. Fat good it did us, they decided they want nothing to do with us afterwards and left. Well, fuck you too, damn bastards. I hope that poor slob that you left behind gets mauled by skoxen.

Zathel's note:

I found the reason why dwarves and animals were so intent on going outside. Someone (I think it was SethCreiyd) left an active meeting zone outside, near the shaft into the caverns. I deleted it, so no more problems of this nature should pop up.

24th Galena 513

I think that bloke the caravan left behind wasn't with them. I mean he was, but not a part of it, as in,

not a trader. I decided to let him in. Or at least offer him this opportunity. At the same time as the gate opened, a cat unexplicably died midway through the spiral staircase. An omen perhaps? That, or foot rot. We'll never know.

It seems I made the right call about that human. It turns out he's a liaison from Mountainhomes. He came up to Twobeard, said "Hi" and asked to be let out. Yeah, right, I will, right away. I wonder if I can lock him in somewhere and leave him to starve. Maybe our dear queen Led will get a clue after her lackey doesn't return.

25th Galena 513

I don't think he will, and it's not even my fault. After realizing that gates will stay closed, that guy braced himself and went into the third cavern layer. Just like that. I am shocked, amazed, and I feel a little guilty. He had guts, if nothing else.

17th Limestone 513

Totem rises up slowly over the desolate landscape of the Plains of Ooze. I'm not entirely sure what it should represent. Maybe a skull? Skulls are always good. We'll have problems with bone block supply though, even if we only use them for the outer walls. I'd make sure goblin bone blocks were facing the front, but from the distance no one would be able to tell, so why bother.

5th Sandstone 513

No more bone blocks. We've run out of bones. Other dwarves tell me that only some of the bones work in my reaction. It seems I need to work on it. There are tons of skulls lying around... why can't we use them?

15th Sandstone 513

I've ordered any unprocessed corpse still inside the walls to be brought to butcher's shops for processing. Maybe we can scavenge extract some more bones for the blocks. We'll need a couple dozen more to complete the totem in the form I planned. If not, I'll have to improvise.

20th Sandstone 513

Just in case, I decided to slaughter all warthogs, save one (for zoo's sake). We could use the meat anyway, and they smell worse than muskoxen.

27th Sandstone 513

It seems none of the bones from corpses can be used in reaction. Shame. Might as well stock the larders of Battlefailed with meat. I hope everyone here likes meat. We'll be eating it for decades to come. I guess if I ever get around to sculpting, I need to make a statue of Urist McPasteur in thanks for inventing his incredible preservation methods (especially his "5-minute rule") used in our society nowadays.

13th Timber 513

Goblins arrived today. About two score of them. I don't bother with counting exactly, they won't be getting in, they'll get bored and then they'll leave. Damn shame totem isn't finished.

15th Timber 513

Power must be getting to my head. Since there are no bowmen with them, I actually considered getting together with few others and basking in good ol' fashioned carnage. Cries of battle, clash of steel on iron, screams of the wounded, dance of life and death, trance of war and all that stuff.

Then I drank some beer and got better.

17th Timber 513

Thank god I came to my senses. Another score and some of them arrived, including a dozen or so bowmen. And a few trolls. It is not the day Battlefailed proves it's name was aptly chosen.

23rd Timber 513

Some of the dwarves started complaining about numb feet. Idiots. Just because no one died because of foot rot in a year doesn't mean you can run around naked, the damned extract is still around.

12th Moonstone 513

Today, Zon stumbled upon a gremlin in the spiral staircase at stockpile level. If only every problem Battlefailed suffers from was so kind to come straight to the solution.

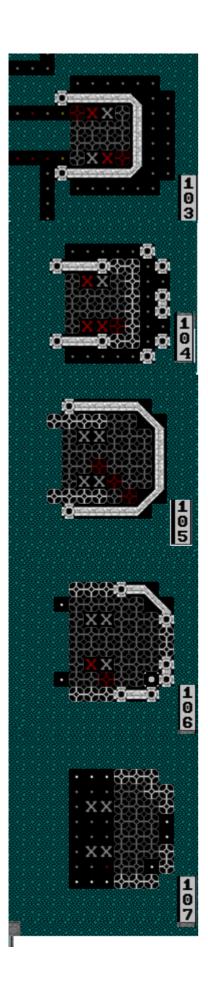
28th Moonstone 513

Goblins still sit there, outside the gates. Only weird thing is that they've split into 3 groups. Hammergobs to the north, by the old shaft, the bulk of axegobs, lashers and archers southeast of the gate, on the plains, and a couple trolls at the beach, south of the fortifications. Are they planning something? Not likely. If they had any way of breaching the gates or bypassing the walls, they'd have done so long ago.



1st Opal 513

That's it for the totem this year, I guess. I feel queasy just thinking about slaughtering more livestock, and we ran out of bones. Maybe my successor will pick it up. Maybe not.



7th Opal 513

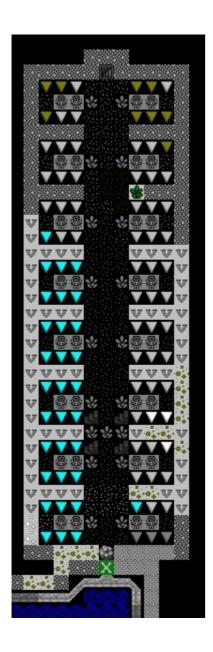
The pump stack for the reservoir and irrigation isn't working. I don't know why. Maybe it has something to do with the tunnel dig out into the cavern at tle lowest level (WHY?). Maybe it has to do with the lake being made of obsidian now. If I could get my hands on the idiots that pulled off this foolishness, I would... gah. For the time being, I ordered reconstruction of the pump at the very bottom of the stack. Hopefully it'll help.

13th Opal 513

I found the reason for the whole pump stack mess. Bureaucracy. Apparently I was the only dwarf unaware that for some unfathomable reason usage of that one pump was forbidden due to some silly document. Thank gods I found that stupid piece of paper before I ordered construction of another pump right next to the perfectly functioning one. Shame I couldn't find it in time to stop the mining work to prepare space for it.

15th Opal 513

Finally, the reservoir is refilled. One more problem for the reactor out of the way. Now it only needs water wheels and axles to connect the gears. I'll finish installing the drainage system in coming days. However, actually flooding the banks of the power stations will have to wait until wheels are finished.



27th Opal 513

Today, Onul, of of the most recent migrants, gave birth to a boy. She named him Erush. I guess Battlefailed isn't that bad of a place if children are still born here.

3rd Obsidian 513

Drainage and water access floodgate mechanisms for the reactor are complete. I hope the rest of this month, and my term at the same time, will be uneventful and peaceful.

18th Obsidians

When I looked over the wall today, the goblins were gone. I wonder when they'll come again. I hope it'll be next winter, so they won't disrupt the caravans. I just love seeing the buggers stand in the rain, wallowing in muck of Plains of Ooze while being battered by pungent winds blowing from over the Blueness of Malodors.

1st Granite 514

Finally, I can lay down the burdens of leadership. It was a rather peaceful year, even if non of the big projects I planned out last Granite are finished. Not enough dwarves, not enough resources. I just hope next overseer will be someone more suited for the job.



TURN 16 – ANDREUS *Stuzang*

K♥buk Tiristmond♥l Azmol Monom® #K♥buk Rimgrave the Obscurity of Papers#®

VWIP!

1st Granite, 514

Again I return from the darkness - and this time, I decided upon a body and mind far more fit for continued survival than my previous incarnations. It strikes me as a little odd I didn't think of this before. Something else that I cannot help but remark upon are the mind-searingly terrifying screams I heard while traversing the void between the world of the gods and departed spirits and this realm - I don't really remember that happening the last two times. I'll have to get on to Lur or Sahed to fix that for next time - really does spoil the trip. Either way, I have returned to the land of the living, and it seems that all is not well.





7th Slate, 514

Curses.

```
Andreus IV
                 Tiristmond@l
             IV
Andreus
                  Rimgrave
                               the
upper
        body
lower body
head
right upper
                arm
left upper arm
right lower arm Numb
left lower arm
right hand
left hand
right upper leg
left upper leg
right lower leg
left lower leg
right foot
left foot
g:Gen i:Inv p:Prf w:Wnd z:St
Escape: Done
```

CURSES!

```
Andreus IV
                  Tiristmond91
Andreus IV
                    Rimgrave
                                  the
                                       0bs
upper
        body
lower
       body
head
right upper arm
left upper arm
right lower arm Numb
left lower arm
right hand
left hand
right upper leg
left upper leg
right lower leg
left lower leg
right foot
left foot
 :Gen i:Inv p:Prf w:Wnd z:St
 scape: Done
```

25th Felsite, 514

→A elven caravan from Fisomawada has arrived

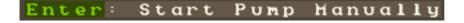
Well we all know what this means.

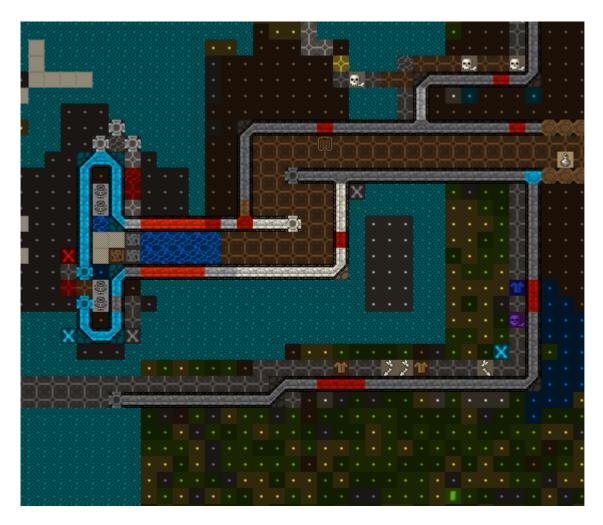




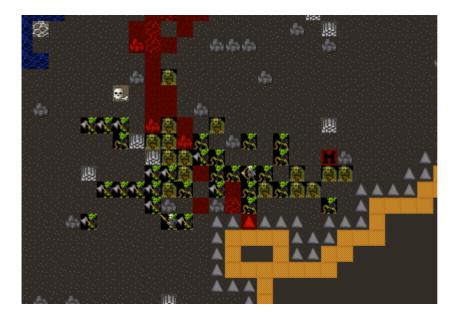
I swear, if it weren't for the fact that every time they see them they hack them to bits, I'd swear that the goblins were in league with the elves.

Our militia can't possibly repel firepower of this magnitude so there's only one thing for it - the FAILCANNON must be deployed. Due to unfinished maintenance work a former overseer attempted to perform on it, it cannot be deployed automatically. There's only one thing for it.

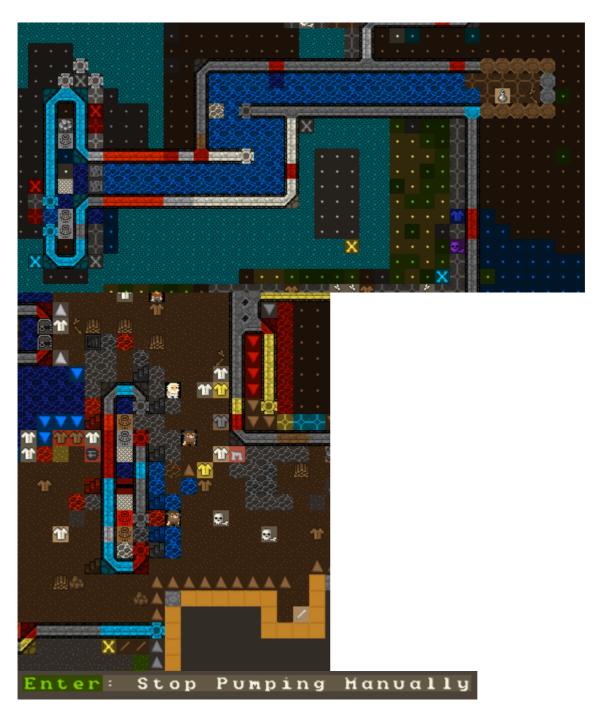




The deployment shaft begins to fill with the Blueness of Malodor's befouled waters and I prepare to commit to memory the faces of the goblins as they are inundated under a tide of... wait, what?



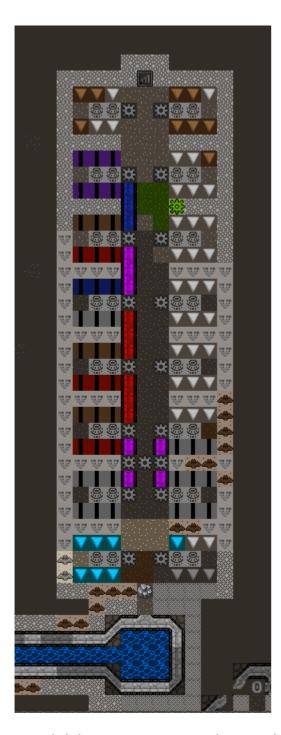
Goddamnit! They've just moved to the beach, where FAILCANNON can't reach them - wait, what?!



3rd Hematite, 514

```
Elk
       covering
                  (upper
                          body)
water
                          body)
       covering
water
                  (head)
water
       covering
water
      covering
                  (right
                         front
water
       covering
                   left
                  (right
(left
water
                  (right
(left
                                leg
water
       covering
                               leg)
                  (right
                                hoo
water
       covering
                          rear
water
       covering
                  (left
                         rear hoof
water
                  (tail)
       covering
                  (right
(left
water
                          eye)
water
                         eye)
water covering (right ear)
       i:Inv p:Prf w:Wnd z:St
 scape:
         Done
```

The end result of FAILCANNON's deployment are two extremely damp elks, drenched hoof-to-horn in the foul water of the Blueness.



On a slightly more positive note, the Eternal Machine is in and of itself well on its way to completion, but a curious issue strikes me. I cannot work out through which combination of its control levers it will correctly activate. I must consult the schematics further, and see if I can divine the correct method by which it should be initialised.

24th Galena, 514

I looked outside today and it seems the goblins have vanished. I imagine the somewhat impregnable nature of the front gates combined with the fact that we can (admittedly very inefficiently) dump several metric tons of befouled seawater on their heads if they try to assault them must have rather eroded their conviction.

In other news, I have begun work on the final solution to the goblin problem - an undertaking which will undoubtedly take years, and I am unlikely in the extreme to be able to sustain leadership of this place for that long save some public relations miracle of cosmic proportions with the other denizens of this fortress. However, I shall start, and if the dwarves of this place desire a future, they shall complete its construction long after I have moved on.

Ladies and gentledwarves, I present to you: FAILCANNON PRIME.

I have used knowledge not of this world to aid in its construction. In a previous incarnation, I was permanent administrator at Laboredholy, one of dwarvenkind's most well-kept secret successes. For more than thirty years she stood before I died and passed from that world into another, and never have I been in a more successful fortress. Initially our forges were placed just above the great magma sea, but this became an arduous journey indeed, down more than a hundred flights of stairs through three separate cave levels. Part of the secret of its later successes was the magma plumbing which we used to funnel magma from the great magma sea far beneath the mountain into the forges only two flights of stairs beneath the main concourse in the highest level of the cave system. This kept the caves warm and allowed a new set of forges just below the rest of the fortress. To enable this we created a truly immense pump stack, a marvel of interdependent engineering that allowed us to raise the magma to the level we required it. It took five years to build, and suffered several setbacks everything from attacks from forgotten beasts to an exhausted supply of iron.

I have dredged the memories out of the fog of ages with several arcane invocations and have reproduced as much as I can of the original design. At that point in my manylife, before I had discovered the secret of the Eternal Engine, the device had to be powered off a wind farm on the surface, which was an inelegant and inefficient method of obtaining the neccessary motive force to keep the stack running. The axle and the turbines were also vulnerable to attack - a besieging army could have wrecked the turbines or the axle and disabled the stack (although we never suffered from such an ailment, as the kingdom in which we lived was an island nation, quite secure from any goblins). It never occured to me at the time to use such a stack to create a weapon - the only attacks we suffered from were forgotten beasts and the occasional giant cave spider, which were too irregular, erratic and unpredictably placed to effectively deploy magma against.

The stack will be the equivalent height of roughly one hundred and three flights of stairs, and will in places cut through empty space in the caverns around which stone containment walls will need to be built. However, the masterstroke in the modified plans which I have drawn up is that when it is operational we shall be able to power FAILCANNON PRIME's stack off of the Eternal Engine, meaning that the device is self-contained and need not present any vulnerable parts to the world above - only the business end of its magma pump, which shall rain down fire and brimstone upon the heads of all who oppose us.

For this undertaking we shall need 110 stone or iron blocks, 110 iron pipe sections, 110 iron corkscrews, 110 iron doors. At the very least we shall need 330 units of hematite, limonite or magnetite and 110 stones of a magma-safe material. I remember from my second incarnation within this stinking pit of hell that I crafted a sanctum for myself within a deposit of magnetite, but I believe that it's currently flooded with water or otherwise inaccessible.

I prefer iron, because it won't melt if there's a magma accident that submerges the pump.

12th Limestone, 514

My journeys between realities, through the many levels of the hereafter and across the endless void that separates them and everything inbetween, though harrowing and tiring to my eternal soul, have

not been without fruit. I have seen wonders and terrors beyond the wildest imaginings of lesser minds - and I've learnt knowledge that no mortal could hope to. And so it is that I try a grand experiment - through the use of Void Sorcery, I shall attempt a grand invocation to attempt to free the two souls trapped in spiritual stasis inside the cursed arena.



??????????????????????????????



It worked... partially. Only Dante was freed from his eternal prison, but at least I have wrenched one soul from the void. Now he's... whispering to himself and running off?



```
Dante Ed#mkezat

Dante Keydanger
          Edynkezat Redeemed
X(giant olm leather trous
X(pig tail fiber dress)X
                         trousers)X
                spider
                          silk
        spider
                  silk
                          сαр
  large
       tail
              fiber
       tail
                      right
       tail
              fiber
                      sock)X
       tail
              fiber
                       shoe)X
ock)X
         spider silk
       tail fiber
g:Gen i:Inv p:Prf w:Wnd
Escape:
          Done
```

Out of interest, I notice that due to being locked in time for several years, he's the only member of the fortress still wearing clothes by choice.

25th Limestone, 514

```
Dante Edynkezat has begun a mysterious construction!
Masons
         Workshop
                               TB ]
saltpeter
cassiterite
                               TSK
                               TSK
gabbro
                               TSK
gabbro
iron bars
                               TSK
      tail
                               TSK
                               TSK
               logs
                               TSK
                               TSK
spore tree logs
                               TSK
cut clear glass gems
   Forbid
                         171
             d:
                 Dump
                              Helt
                          Select
Enter: View
                              Hide
                          \mathbf{h}
Escape: Done
```

2nd Sandstone, 514

```
Dante Edwhkezat Redeemed Soul has created Sheshek #blel a cassiterite hatch cover!

Press Enter to close window

Sheshek #blel #The Tip of Busts a cassiterite hatch cover

This is a cassiterite hatch cover All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality It is encrusted with gabbro decorated with blood thorn and encircled with bands of pig tail fiber tower-cap and clear glass. This object is adorned with hanging rings of spore tree and menaces with spikes of cassiterite and peridot.

On the item is an image of Feb Soakedlancers the dwarf and dwarves in gabbro Feb Soakedlancers is surrounded by the dwarves. The artwork relates to the appointment of the dwarf Feb Soakedlancers to the position of general of The Sword of Boots in 8

On the item is an image of Curlcrypts the giant cave spider silk hood in iron
```

Well, it is a VERY nice hatch cover, but I'm not entirely sure what use we'll find for it.

The aquifer in Upper Battlefailed has somehow burst open and is flooding the old farming area, so I've ordered one of the vertical accessways into the upper area of the fort to be paved over before the water reaches it. This shaft seems, as far as I can tell, to reach all the way down to the third cavern, breaching a solid pillar of rock in the second cavern to descend safely through the slime ocean, coming out near the obsidian flats the old lava pump used to produce (I am henceforth calling that my "proof of concept"). I have no idea what the purpose of this shaft is, but if it isn't sealed, the whole place will, quite inevitably, drown until the water reaches the level of the aquifer. I've unforbidden everything in the affected areas of Upper Battlefailed that it's safe to recover, and ordered the shaft sealed while we still can.

16th Timber, 514

```
A caravan from Dastot Cog has arrived
```

Finally! We've been waiting for this chance to show the Mountainhomes there's still life in Battlefailed for-

```
An ambush! Skulking vermin!
An ambush! Skulking vermin!
An ambush! Skulking vermin!
```

wait, what?!

```
Lrajrilis Kobold Swordsman Lrajrilis 8
```

You've got to be joking.

```
Andreys IV Tiristmond Aznol Honom Voldwalker has been struck down Fikod Koganilush Dumatedod Egom Hiner has been struck down Trith Trithish Hiner has suffocated Ilmoran Imtulon Legendary Mason has suffocated Zon Ethadadil Berk's Kilan Swordsmaster has suffocated Urist the Viole(n)t Gomathgeshud Wrestler has been struck down Lucus Casius Dodykoc g Axedwarf has been struck down Pisano Tommoslan Former Overseer has suffocated Creiydrek @dathel Lolokabod Nog Former Overseer has suffocated
```



Your settlement has crumbled to its end

It was over so fast. Half the fortress was dead before anyone knew what had happened.

The creature must have been enraged by the vibrations of the Engine as it began to grind into gear there was no other explanation for the speed and ferocity of its attack, when so many other creatures had made their presences known years before any aggression was offered. Finding quick passage into the fortress, the monstrous stonefly screamed up the access shaft into the guts of the fortress - perhaps by chance, perhaps by some quirk of karma, perhaps by attraction to his mystic aura, Andreus' fourth incarnation was his first target. It was perhaps an indication of the fortress' impending fate when despite his incarnation's skill with an axe and quickness of body, he fell in an instant, struck dead by the monster before he could even scream. Soul shorn from his body, he could only watch as Fikod Koganilush Dumatedod Egom, one of the fortress' champions, was dashed against the walls in a similar fashion. Two miners fell dead by the time someone had fought to raise the alarm and mobilise the militia, little knowing the beast was far, far beyond such petty interruptions. As the first squad approached, the forgotten abomination showed its true, horrifying power - releasing a shockwave of foul, cloying dust, it stopped Battlefailed's bravest sons in their tracks, those who were not set upon by the thing immediately were left choking and gasping their last as they watched their friends cut down in front of them.

Nearly every former overseer of the fort left alive until that point was killed almost simultaneously - a somewhat fitting, if macabre closure to their careers. With no serious resistance left in the fortress, its malevolent gaze turned upon the most defenceless of all the residents - the children. A dozen screams rang out through the fortress in quick succession as each child was torn limb from limb. A last-ditch effort was made to save the fortress as every remaining dwarf who could hold a weapon ran to the stockpiles and siezed whatever instrument of war they could lay their hands on, charging the beast as one, with all the courage, fury and honour a dwarf with nothing to lose can muster.

It was a brave and honourable but ultimately futile guesture. Those who did not die instantly were to die a slow, painful death as Stuzung's foul dust filled their lungs and stopped their breath.

"Nightmarebros", one of the only survivors, clung to life for days afterwards, managing to crawl up to a safe spot where he could hide from the monster as it took out its unending rage upon the dining hall, the arena and the various workshops that had once filled the place with the clamour of chisel upon stone and saw upon wood. His back was broken in several places and the beast had hacked off his leg just below the knee - dragging himself on his hands and his one good leg had taken hours of painful, agonising effort, but for now he was safe. But to what future? Should the great armies of Dastot Cog arrive this very hour he would never walk again at the very best - more likely he would die choking within the next few days, for the dust was in his lungs. The fortress as he knew it was shattered, a boneyard and a charnel-house full only of the ashes of everything he had once loved. Everyone he knew was dead or dying. His breath slipping from him in ragged, frothy gasps, he pleaded to the gods for it to end.

Whether by the gods, or the spirits, or nature, or simply the random chance of the cosmos, his wish was granted. From his eternal imprisonment burst Leesin - despite being trapped outside of time itself, he somehow possessed an instinctive knowing of what had passed in the fortress. Quietly

slipping past the monster he made his way into Upper Battlefailed. Little did he remember of the place, but he knew enough of what was there to sabotage the floodwalls keeping the foul ocean above out. As the water began to seep in, he made his way to Battlefailed's military stockpile and grabbed for himself what equipment was left after the rest of the populace had ransacked it. Seizing for himself a weapon which will forever be lost in the mists of time, he marched down to the hallway outside the grand dining hall which had once echoed with the rowdy, joyous drinking songs and animated conversations of a hundred or more dwarves. There he spied the beast.

All was lost. But there was still hope - hope that justice might yet be done. As he faced the chittering abomination, Leesin spoke only two words.

"Kar Nokzamungeg" - "For Battlefailed".

He died gloriously, in battle with the beast that had murdered his people, but before his last breath, a smile crossed his lips as a distant crashing was heard.

The water was coming.

Tossing the dwarf's mangled body aside, Stuzung Menacedcave the Dreamy Abyss screeched in rage as it caught the sound of the ocean in the fortress' stale air. Screeching and flailing it cast about to slake its insane rage upon anything within reach, workshops, corpses, doors, statues. The crash echoed closer.

The water was close.

Flailing with all six of its chitinous, vile limbs, this creature, this monster from before the dawn of recorded history, instead of seeking shelter, sought with all its might to somehow avenge its inevitable fate upon its surroundings, giving voice to its frustrations with an unclean holler of vexation. But it was far too late. The crashing water had reached the level of the great hall.

The water had come.

The creature had just time to witness with its many-faceted eyes the doom that awaited it.

And then Battlefailed was gone.

FAILCANNON

"Did we just made reality itself commit suicide?"

"But yes, it's down to this:



"On the plus side, the loyalty cascade is no longer a prime concern."

"I have no idea where anything is. I have no idea what anything does. This is not merely a madhouse designed by a madman, but a madhouse designed by many madmen, each with an intense hatred for the previous madman's unique flavour of madness."

"Failcannon is more of an undead monstrosity than any of the creatures in the Plain of Ooze could hope to be."

"'Oh.

That door.'

'A succinct summation of the fort as a whole.'"

"But is funny to throw cripples trough a sinkhole."

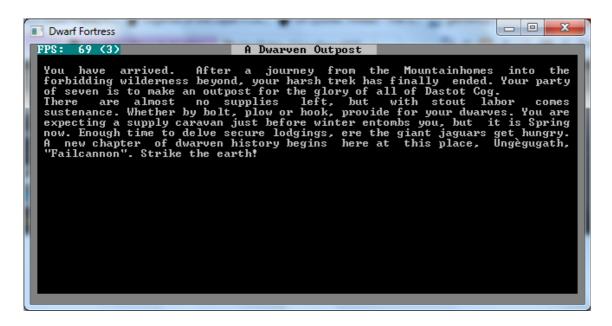
TURN 1 – URIST IMIKNORRIS

Super happy Fun beach

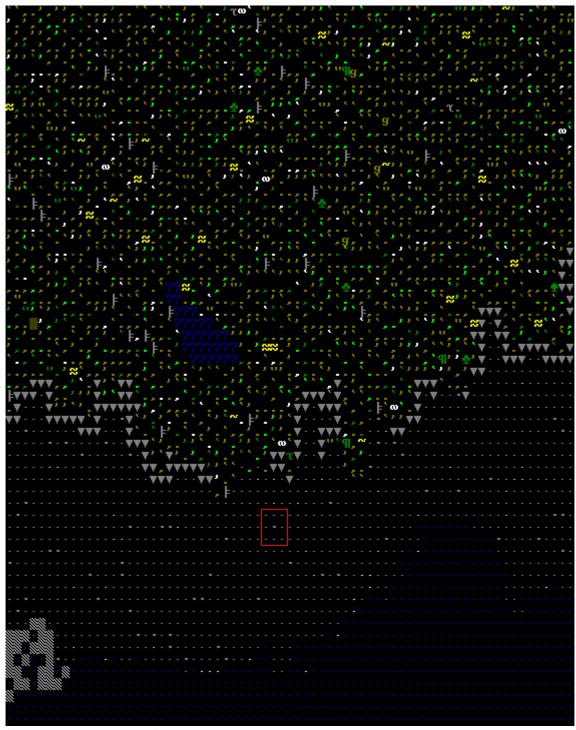
Journal of Urist the Red, 1st Granite, 516.

A dwarf who calls himself Andreus has gathered the six of us to go with him on a mission to tame the Blueness of Malodors.

He claims to have some experience in dealing with this type of environment, but I doubt his words.



This is a terrible place.



(wagon location outlined)

The "beach" is naught but rock and most of the surface vegetation is dead. I feel this dwarf will be the death of us all, bringing us to a place such as this.

2nd Granite

Andreus told me today that I was in charge of "setting up" our new home, whatever that means. I asked him where my pick was and he pointed to a lump of copper ore in the wagon. Asshole. I told Felcis and Turkey to set up a smelter and Spanner volunteered to man it. We have some tin so we can

make bronze, and there's a horn silver boulder underneath one of the wine barrels, so Spanner can have a nice heavy hammer.

1st Slate

Spanner and I have carved out a small area underground to serve as a makeshift dormitory/dining room. Currently we're setting up a bridge over the entrance. We're also digging out an area for farming, which we'll flood from the ocean via lever-linked door.

The fishing seems to be good.



20th Slate

(Imagine if you would that the expedition's overseer went down to the farming area with a pick and a determined expression. You hear a door open, and a dwarf mining. You fall asleep.

When you wake up, you see the overseer standing next to your bed, completely drenched in water from head to toe. He tells you that the farming area no longer needs flooding. This is what Turkey XIV experienced.)



Journal of Andreus, Voidwalker

Once again, I return from the endless void... I could have used a better host than this snaggletoothed old crone, but hopefully that won't be an issue soon. The others did not believe me when I said I had experience with this place - I've had enough experience with this place for a lifetime. *Four* lifetimes. Once, killed by slavering, undead monsters. Once, by drowning in the blueness. Once, by... heck, even I can't remember - and once, to that vile creature Stuzang.

Stuzang. That creature worries me. Such a powerful abomination should not exist in this world, yet there it was. Battlefailed fell to its monstrous wrath. The walls of reality are slowly collapsing, and I must discover why. The incompetent gods of this world blame my constant reincarnation, yet this body-hopping is a technique I have used so many dozens of times across so many worlds that I forget exactly how many faces I've worn - why should it begin to cause an erosion of the doors between the worlds now? I fear something *far* more sinister than myself is at work here.

Battlefailed drew trouble to it like a magnet - there was no monster that did not eventually find its way to our door. What is hidden beneath the Plains of Ooze that is so valuable?

The goings of the gods:

"Oh my!"

This scream came from Lur the Jealous as he peered at the physical world from his All-seeing Tree, whose exposed heartwood displayed a phantasmal image of seven dwarves contemplating a newly-flooded section of farm-rock. He reached the length of his arm into the tree, passing through the woody trunk which rippled like a disturbed glass of milk. His fingers emerged clutching a bloodshot eyeball that pulsed like a beating heart.

Moving with deific speed, he was now in a grand chamber covered in symbols so secret only three mortals in the entire multiverse would recognize them. There were no doorways in any of the pillared walls, and in the center of the room was a long crystalline table surrounded by a number of comfortable-looking leather chairs, the exact number of which seemed to change with each passing

instant. Lur threw the curious eyeball at the ceiling. The collision released a dazzling explosion of a color not possible to describe.

The other gods were already answering his mental summons. One by one the deities of Aluonra manifested themselves directly into the chairs, of which there were now several hundred, with some floating dozens of feet in the air, occupied or not. As there were no mortals present, there was no risk in driving anyone insane, so they were each in their true shape, formless but not without form.

"This had better be a public apology, Lur," said Kigok Pokercooks immediately, though it was less a statement than a congealed projection of annoyance.

Lur pointed skyward, and the gods' eyes all followed the seven dwarves now pictured on high. "What the hell is wrong with dwarves?" someone called out. It was Otik the Blueness of Flickers.

"What indeed," added Kigok, who was known to be an attention-seeker. "What needs to happen before they avoid such a place?"

"That," said Lur, while he continued to point and the ceiling took on the appearance of a bald dwarf with a tiny nose, "is not who it should be. It's the Sorcerer, he's behind this. I don't know how he convinced them, but it looks like they're trying for a new settlement there."

"Not to mention the collapse of improbability," intoned Bengel, who was associated with lust and depravity.

"Oh, let's mention it!" cried out Kigok. "It's been a real thorn in my side."

"Shall we review?" Zimesh, whose followers envisioned him as a rotting corpse, pulled a scroll out of thin air and slid a long bony finger along the parchment, and sat up as his chair lifted high above the rest.

Lur protested. "Like I said a thousand and six times, that --"

"You resurrected a mortal who had been to the Lost Library." Zimesh gave Lur a stern glance.

"I figured he'd be off to the Abode of Unending Pleasure. I told him exactly how to find it!"

"A mortal already guilty of bodysnatching. You sent him BACK to Aluonra with augmented knowledge when you FOUND him *reading in the Library*." This was supplied by Nifih the Pond Grabber, who never stopped smiling.

"Look, he needed to go back, to prevent the Conflict of Atrocities. It would have opened the Seal!" Lur had already explained all of this, and was growing impatient.

"It could have been closed again," glowered Egath Seasonlord, "but crumbling as it is now, it's almost useless. And what has already come out..." He trailed off, giving an involuntary shiver.

Anan the Cave Fish God spoke for the first time that century, "Given our last attempt to subdue the Sorcerer in Limbo, it's unlikely he'll return there by choice."

"It's not just him," added Limul, the Goddess of Metal. "Half of the dead and displaced aren't getting to Limbo either." The image on the ceiling flickered to show those lucky souls that found other worlds and bodies to possess, casting now-homeless souls to the aether. Those less fortunate were

shown presently wandering the cavernous ruins of Battlefailed, halls of the earthbound damned, in monstrous bodies not fit for happiness.

"You messed up, Lur," said a young god named Thoth, who at six thousand years was barely old enough to speak.

"I know, I know," Lur held up a hand dismissively. "I'm sorry, alright? We can all blame me after we've fixed up the cosmos."

The other gods looked among themselves, then all of them looked back at Lur, who was suddenly pinged by the godly equivalent of nervousness.

"This has been a long time coming," said the hundreds of voices in chorus.

If Lur had a heart it would have been pounding. They had entered The Union without him. It meant only one thing.

Ar-en-ji, thought the gods loudly.

'I can explain,' Lur almost began, but thought better of it. "I can explain!" he said anyway, and marveled at saying precisely what he'd specifically decided not to say.

"Irrelevant. Your action's consequences cannot be ignored. Your fate is sealed." The eyes of the other gods were glowing yellow, brighter and louder until all the room was awash in golden light. Like an elongated thunderclap, a low rumble rose up from the floor.

"Your actions have condemned the innocent and undermined existence. Your mistakes will be fixed for you. You are stripped of godhood, Lur Thiefwitch. Go now and live as one of the mortals you have doomed to extinction." The gods all raised their arms at once. There was a bolt of lightning, a cloud of smoke, and Lur Thiefwitch was gone. The light of the room faded as the eyes of the Gods faded to black. The eyeball fell out of the ceiling with a wet noise and shattered on the ground. The pieces boiled away into nothingness. The room was quiet.

Her face grim, Kigok rose out of her chair. "We must contact the other worlds. And figure out what we can do."

Journal of Urist the Red 23rd Malachite

Some migrants have arrived.

Melkorp, a wood burner/cook
NightmareBros, a butcher
Derm, a planter by trade, but seems to want to do everything
Mipe, a soldier
Mekboy, a (high master) glassmaker
Dariush, a cook with a knack for weaponsmithing
Pisano, a milker who wants to try masonry and has some armoring skill
Nat, a useless novice potash maker

I also found out that our farmer's name is Lupusater.

2nd Sandstone

Mipe died of thirst today. Apparently he decided to stay outside when the gate was closed. He will not be missed.

Andreus decided to tell me about a method of making bones into blocks. I told him this would be useful when we actually get to kill things. He pointed to the animals that the migrants had brought with them and told me to butcher the mule foal and the cow calf. I told Derm to get to work. I can see a thriving horse bone block industry in the far future.

21st Sandstone

More migrants:

cappstv, a fish dissector
LordSlowpoke, a bowyer
Oglokoog, a stoneworker
Lucus Casius, a fisherdwarf (our new chief medical dwarf)
dragonshardz, a metalsmith

17th Timber

The liaison and caravan have come at last. We traded some stone mugs for a rope, booze, and food. Andreus met with the liaison and ordered copper bars (I don't know why, I think he likes copper) and booze.

20th Obsidian

We are preparing to move the meeting area further underground. I found a schematic for a waterfall-based misting device and am having the parts for the pumps made now. There will be one change to the design - the gear assemblies will be suspended between the pumps and over the channels. A slightly less efficient design, but we still only need two windmills.

1st Granite, 517

We've been here for a full year and haven't seen much excitement. Just undead horses and one dwarf too dumb to live. I'm entrusting the fortress to Mekboy and retiring. I'll be in the lower levels.

TURN 2 - MEKBOY

Mountain elf

Mekboy's Journal

So the previous overseer came and shoved a load of paperwork into my hands, saying 'Screw this, you take over'. Finally. I knew my natural talent would shine through. So let's have a look at this fort...

THE HELL?

Where is anything? Where's the mason's workshops? And the mechanics? And the booze? Also, why's no-one doing anything?

```
PPS: 99 (44)

Dwarf Fortress

Urist the Red' Udibgisëk, Miner Make enormous wooden corkscrew
Spanner' orendok, militia commander No Job
LordSlowpoke' Asobkurel, Worker No Job
Oglokoog' Rurastlikot, Stoneworker PelcisGreenshirt' Likotlegon, Mason No Job
dragonshardz' Sodelkol, Furnace Operatorre Item in Barrel
Andreus U' Cerolstagshil, Running Gag Reborn
Glacial' Solontôsed, Armorer
Mekboy' Tekkudâl, Glassmaker
LucusCasius' Berimesh, chief medical
cappsto' Ralost, Worker
Pisano' Ustuthaval, Worker
Pisano' Ustuthaval, Worker
No Job
NightmareBros' Adilked, Worker
No Job
NightmareBros' Adilked, Worker
No Job
Drink
Derm' Mismebzuth, Multitasker
No Job
Nat' Mafollumash, Potash Maker
No Job
Turkey XIU' Uzolnîng, Mechanic

V: UiewCre, c: Zoom-Cre, b: Zoom-Bld, m: Manager, r: Remv Cre
```

I quickly sorted through the jobs, sorting them into two kinds of dorf: useful and not. The useful dorfs got ordered to do nothing but their best skills, and the useless ones got told to do everything else (hauling, wall build et.c.).

From what I understand, the leader had plans to set up some kinda mist generator in the meeting hall. Now I like a nice bit of sparkly mist as much as any dorf, so I happily continued his requests. I also found some weird room out in the sea.



Neat. I'll have it engraved and make it into my personal chambers. Probably extend it too. I also found a rather confusing note.



Evidently a lever of some kind once stood here, and was not supposed to be pulled. Ever. How boring.

In an attempt to make this fortress a little more organised, I made plans for a huge staircase to be dug, around which we could base our home.



Even in this hellhole, apparently you can find some happiness. Turkey and Lupusater have gotten married. Luckily, they did not hold any celebration. Probably because we've got nowhere *to* celebrate.

```
Page 4/4FPS: 100 (49)

Dwarf Fortress

3rd Granite, 51?

Lupusater' Fikodtimnär, Planter cancels Remove Construction: Interrupted by Buzzard.

Lucus Casius' Berimesh, chief medical dwarf cancels Store Item in Stockpile: Job item misplaced.

Felis Greenshirt' Likotlegon, Mason cancels Construct rock Statue: Job item lost or destroyed.

A thief has stolen a 'bronze battle axe+!

A thief has stolen a (iron shield)!

A thief has stolen a (iron chain leggings)!

Mekboy' Tekkudāl, Glassmaker cancels Dump Item: Drop-off inaccessible.

Spring has arrived!

The Mechanic 'Turkey XIU' Uzolning and the Planter 'Lupusater'

Fikodtimnär have married. Congratulations!

They have decided to forego any formal celebrations.
```

As if spurred on by this, our militia commander 'Spanner' and our armourer 'Glacial' also got married.



In preparation for the mist generator, I ordered somebody to empty buckets of water down a hole until we had sufficient water for it to run.

```
Page 5/6FPS: 92 (49)

Dwarf Fortress

18th Granite, 517

source.

'Spanner' órendok has become a militia commander.
You have struck bituminous coal!

LordSlowpoke' Asobkurel, Worker cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
You have struck marcasite!

It has started raining.

'NightmareBros' Adilked, Worker cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'dragonshardz' Sodelkol, Furnace Operator cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'Turkey XIU' Uzolning, Mechanic cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'LordSlowpoke' Asobkurel, Worker cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'LordSlowpoke' Asobkurel, Worker cancels Fill Pond: No water source.

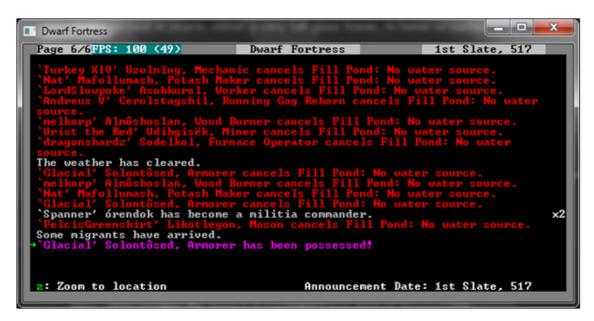
The weather has cleared.
'melkorp' Almoshoslan, Wood Burner cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'cappstv' Ralost, Worker cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'cappstv' Ralost, Worker cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'Turkey XIU' Uzolning, Mechanic cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'Turkey XIU' Uzolning, Mechanic cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'Turkey XIU' Uzolning, Mechanic cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'NightmareBros' Adilked, Worker cancels Fill Pond: No water source.
'Lupusater' Fikodtimnär, Planter cancels Fill Pond: No water source.

2: Zoom to location

Announcement Date: 17th Granite, 517
```

Fuckwits couldn't find anywhere to get water from. We live by the fucking seaside. How hard can it be to find some water?

Oh goody, migrants. A ton of useless idiots, and not one but *two* high master masons. Neat. Also of note was the oddly named 'Vee', an experienced hunter who I promptly put in the military (you wanted danger, and now you're expected to protect Battlefailed. Have fun.) As other migrants ran around shitting themselves at the mere sight of a zombie ground hog, she shot it in the face.



As soon as the migrants began to reach Failcannon itself, Glacial suddenly went mad. Speaking in a voice that was not his own, he demanded someone to build him a crafts workshop. The migrants' first impression was some nutty dwarf demanding a workshop to be built. Welcome to fucking Failcannon.

At least he calmed down once we built him a workshop. He grabbed four pieces of gypsum and started working away feverishly.



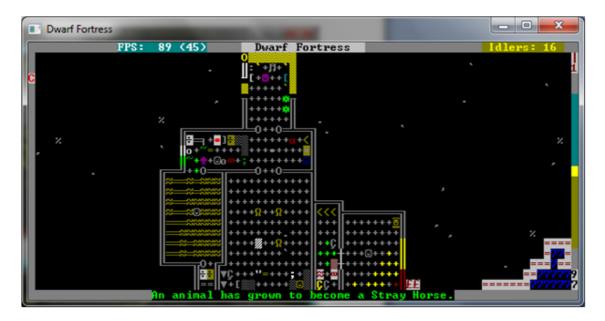
Also some random nobodies got married. But I don't really care.



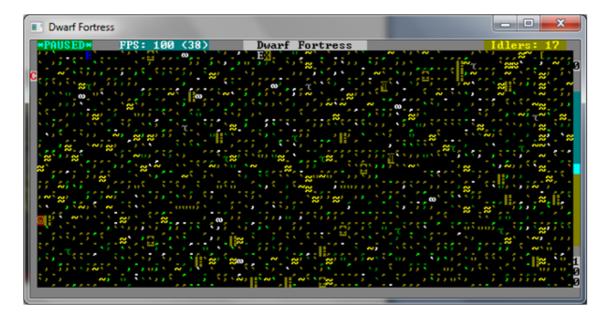
In order to get the water needed for the mist-machine, I built a pump specially to extract water from a pond, to aid the filling.



Finally the idiots got to work. Ah, nothing like a nice cloud of mist.



Wait, what's that coming over the horizon?



Elves. Bugger.
And a kobold ambush to go with them.



Ordering the civilians inside, I had Spanner and Vee attack the kobolds. You can do it, Spanner!



Bugger.

Seeing this, I quickly ordered a handful of mooks no-one would miss to attack them with their bare hands. This went surprisingly well, with only one getting pincushioned, while the kobolds fled.



And where was Vee the whole time? Asleep. Damnit, Vee.

Seeing that Glacial was now demanding cloth, I quickly rushed to the trade depot. I quickly haggled with the elves to get some booze, lots of wood and even a bin of cloth for Glacial in exchange for some spare mechanisms and some dead guy's clothes. But the wait was too much.

```
Page 11/11 FPS: 98 (45)

Page 11/11 FPS: 98 (45)

Thief! Protect the hoard from skulking filth!

'Vee' Kerlogem has become a militia captain.
Minkot Dègsigum has become a Fishery Worker.
Urvad Sazirlar has become a Butcher.

'Glacial' Solontôsed, Armorer cancels Strange Mood: Went insane.

'Glacial' Solontôsed, Armorer has gone stark raving mad!

Tosid Zuglartun has become a Weaver.
Inod Niligath has become a militia captain.
Dastot Cattenbab has become a Miller.

Rakust Abodkol has become a Milker.

2: Zoom to location

Announcement Date: 21st Felsite, 517
```

Bloody elves. Glacial goes insane in front of them, and what do they want?

```
The RunFPS: 98 (46)rn 'Andreus U' Cerolstagshil meets with the elf Woodcr

Ave Ewirèthithu: I am your liaison from the Mountainhomes. Let's discuss your situation.
```

The mountainhomes? This elf was obviously mad too! It might be infectious... Best get him to go away ASAP.

```
The RunFPS: 96 (49)rn 'Andreus U' Cerolstagshil meets with the elf Woodcr

We elves are partial in particular to the trees in the forests surrounding your lands. Although we are loathe to spare a single branch to your senseless slaughter, we are willing to ask that you cap your tree-fells at one hundred until we next meet. I will try to return next year as I am able.

'Andreus U' Cerolstagshil:

a - We can grant this request. Let's discuss the specifics, though...

b - We cannot stop production just because of your quaint sensibilities.
```

Sure, why not. We can just ignore it if we need to.

```
The RunFPS: 100 (47)rn 'Andreus U' Cerolstagshil meets with the elf Woodcr
We can part with at most 122 trees, butcher.

'Andreus U' Cerolstagshil:
a - We can abide by this. Let us work toward mutual co-existence.
b - Our needs exceed your allowances. Relax. They're only trees.
```

Andreus managed to haggle him up to 122 trees. No point in needlessly annoying elves, no matter how hilarious it is.

Now, one of my more important goals as leader: get this industry sorted. On various levels on the staircase will be workshop areas, consisting of a large group of similar workshops and a stockpile for either what they need, or the products. This one here will probably be for stone furniture i.e. masons and mechanics.



Meanwhile Glacial, running around the hills of Failcannon in his insane state, ran into a skeletal horse. Needless to say, hilarity ensued.



Predictably, he had his head kicked in. But that meant that the skeletal menace would no longer be distracted, and Failcannon was missing half its army. Meh, it'll go away if we ignore it. Seeing as Spanner needed fresh water, I decided it was for the good of all of use to rebuild the pump. Only this time nearer the fort.



Anyway, seeing that I wasn't doing much, I appointed myself manager of this place. Besides, I'm the only one who'll understand the work orders.

Workshops churning out boring stuff like doors or block will be like this:



And ones where useful work is done will be like this:

```
PPS: 100 (46)

Permitted Workers

'Urist the Red' Udibgisëk, Miner
'Andreus U' Cerolstagshil, Running Gag Reborn
'Turkey XIU' Uzolning, Mechanic
'FelcisGreenshirt' Likotlegon, Mason
'Lupusater' Fikodtimnär, Planter
'Spanner' órendok, militia commander
'melkorp' Almôshoslan, Wood Burner
'NightmareBros' Adilked, Worker
'Derm' Mismebzuth, Multitasker
'Mekhoy' Tekkudâl, manager
'Dariush' Berlulâr, Cook
'Pisano' Ustuthaval, Worker
'Nat' Mafollumash, Potash Maker
'Oglokoog' Rurastlikot, Stoneworker
'LucusCasius' Berimesh, chief medical dwarf
'cappstv' Ralost, Worker

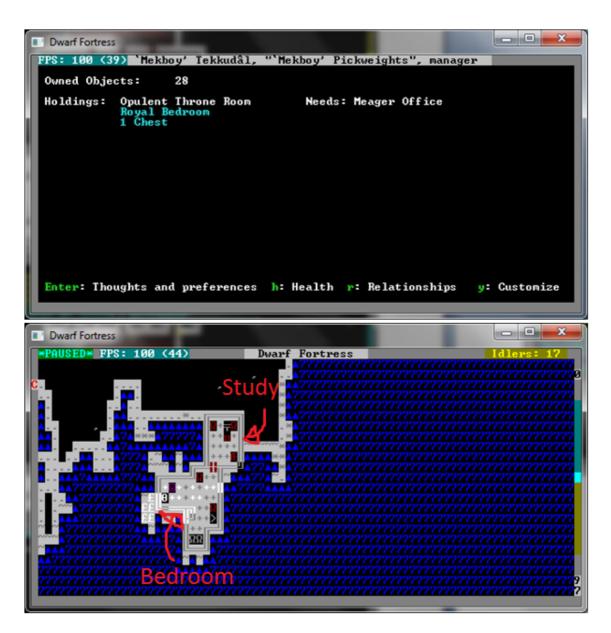
1: Permit All

/**: Min - Competent
-+: Max - Legendary
```

And here's the stone furniture level in all its glory (note how the workshops are colour coded, red for professionals, grey for part timers):



I think, for all my hard work here, I deserve a treat:



Also, some kid was just born.



Yay.

Work on the second workshop level is now underway. This time it's carpentry.



Everything was going great, until...



We quickly build a forge for him, and he got to work (you can also see in this picture our new statue garden. All the masons, including the 2 high master ones, are at work, and I put statues on repeat and forgot to turn it off. Andreus, you've got 4 statues in your room now.



Meanwhile, a skeletal groundhog was annoying some workers, so I sent Vee to go shoot it.

It collapsed after two shots, making up for Vee sleeping through our last hour of need.

```
Page 1/1 FPS: 180 (48)

Dwarf Fortress

12th Galena, 517

The flying ((steel bolt)) strikes The Zombie Groundhog in the upper body, tearing the muscle and tearing the left lung!

The ((steel bolt)) has lodged firmly in the wound!

The flying ((steel bolt)) strikes The Skeletal Groundhog in the right rear leg, chipping the bone!

A tendon has been torn!
```

Journal of Andreus V, undated

Upon observation of my nightly stargaze, I have found something extremely disturbing.

No less than twenty three stars are missing from their ordained place in the sky.

What's worse? They are all stars from the constellation of the Thiefwitch, which is the God of Jealousy Lur's personal arrangement of stars in this reality. I cannot say for certain what this means, but there is no doubt that something disastrous has happened to him, for no god with any self-respect (of which Lur is somewhat lacking but by no means devoid) would ever allow his constellation to be defaced in such a manner if he had any say in the matter. While I've had dealings with Gods before, and am in many ways powerful enough to protect myself from their schemes, killing one is an entirely different matter. In all the three thousand years of my existence as a conscious being, I have never encounted a force powerful enough to even truly wound one, let alone destroy them... I fear that something truly terrible is happening to this universe.

I must try to contact Lur and see what has become of him.

... that is, if I can find my way out of my quarters with all these **HELLS-DAMNED**

STATUES in the way!

Written later, in the same hand, but it appears less tidy, as if hurried:

I was wrong. The constellation is not entirely dead. Upon closer inspection, the star of Tu-Shar-Vo still glows dimly. Perhaps it is not too late.

Mekboy's Journal



So you made one glove. *One* glove. Genius you.

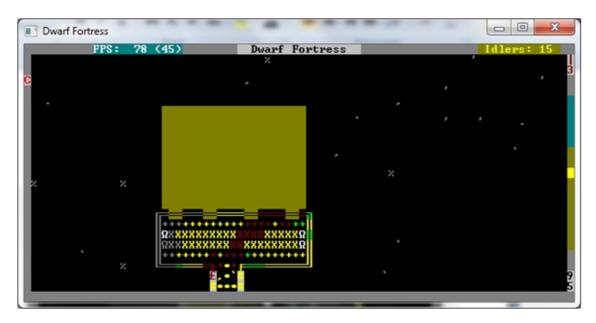




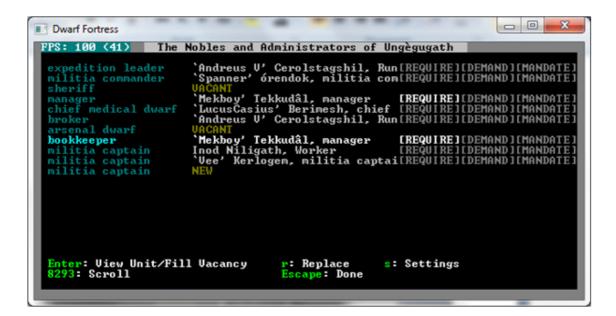
Yay, traders. At least the humans might have something approaching useful.

I gave them a ton of mechanisms and some random clothes lying around in exchange for loads of a food, some booze and a couple of extra picks.

To finish off the somewhat uneventful summer, I laid out my plans for a proper dining room.



To keep myself busy, I also made myself bookkeeper.

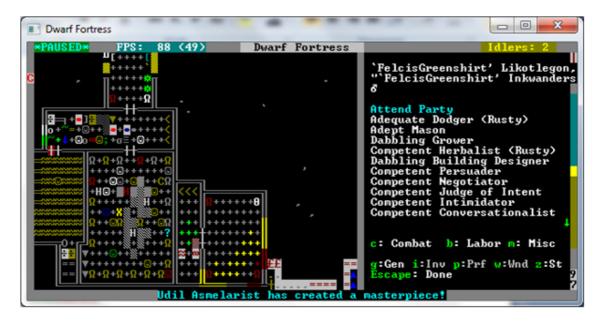


While digging the new dining room we encountered a slight problem.



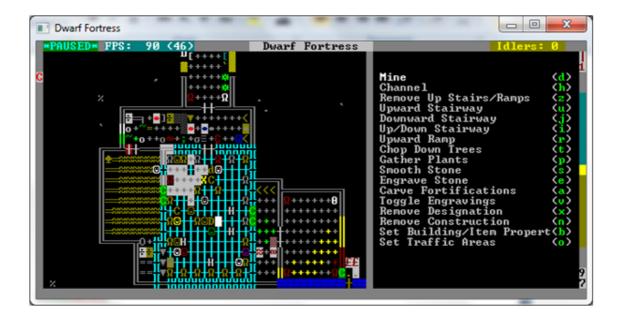


Damnit, aquifier! Luckily no-one drowned, as I had the foresight to install doors. Also, I noticed not much work was being done.



Naturally.

Ah well, it shows that they're happy. To ensure this happiness continued, I had the statue garden engraved.



Seeing a couple of skeletal horses getting too close to the fort, I sent Vee out to deal with them.



Damnit, Vee!

The bridge was closed before both could get it, but now we've got one stuck in the trade depot. I'm having the trade depot door walled over before it breaks through.



On a slightly more positive note, Spanner got better.



Another stroke of luck! No migrants.

```
Page 17/17 FPS: 69 (49)

Dwarf Fortress

13th Sandstone, 517

source.

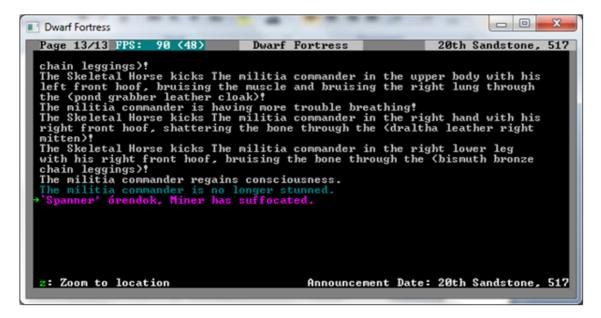
'FelcisGreenshirt' Likotlegon has created a masterpiece!

The fortress attracted no migrants this season.

2: Zoom to location

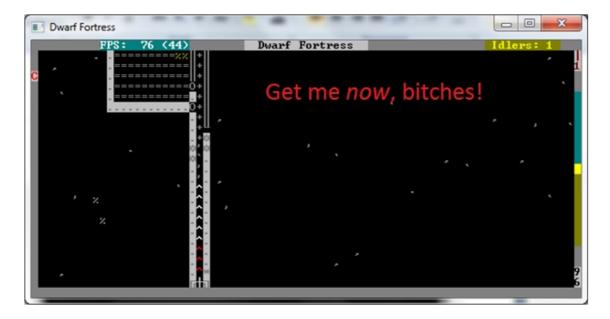
Announcement Date: 12th Sandstone, 517
```

I sent Spanner out, equipped with the new artefact to deal with the Skourse menace.

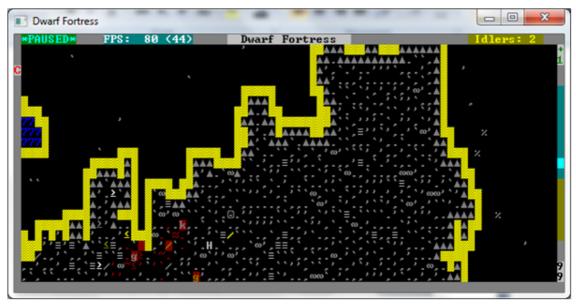


DAMNIT, SPANNER! Is there no-one I can trust not to die? I even sent out a group of random workers to help you, and they wandered back unharmed. Damnit.

I've been struck by a sudden paranoia of the skourses getting inside and killing me everyone so I set up some traps outside my room so that I everyone can run and hide there if they get in.



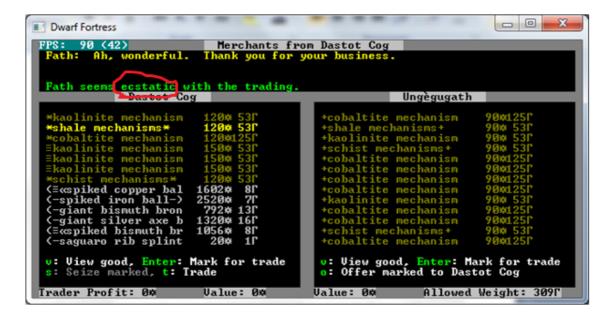
Soon afterwards, a dwaven caravan arrived. I closed the bridge after it arrived, then realised: Andreus and Urist were outside!



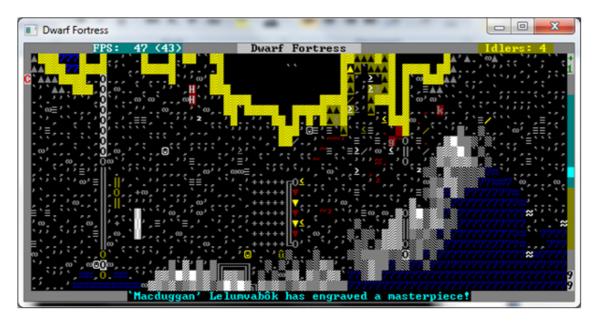
(That's Andreus getting chased there)

I ordered the horde of mooks after it, but it was too late.

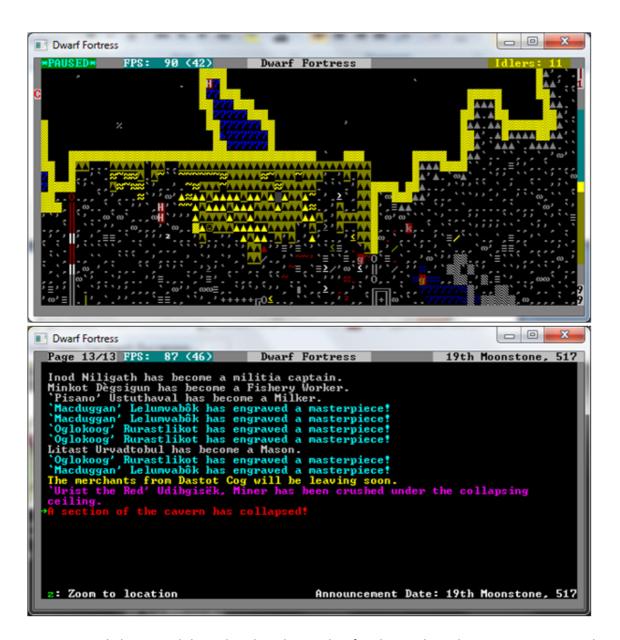
I was forced to take over as broker (and sell Andreus's clothes). At least Urist the Red escaped. I think I gave him too much. I still got a ton of beer, food and metal bars.



Seeing as Failcannon was obviously inadequately defended, I laid out plans for a huge defensive wall.



I also ordered some of the cliff removed.



Damnit, Urist! This caused the rather disturbing sight of Nightmarebros throwing a tantrum. In his sleep.



I fear they may be a tantrum spiral. Cppstv even threw a tantrum during a meeting with me!



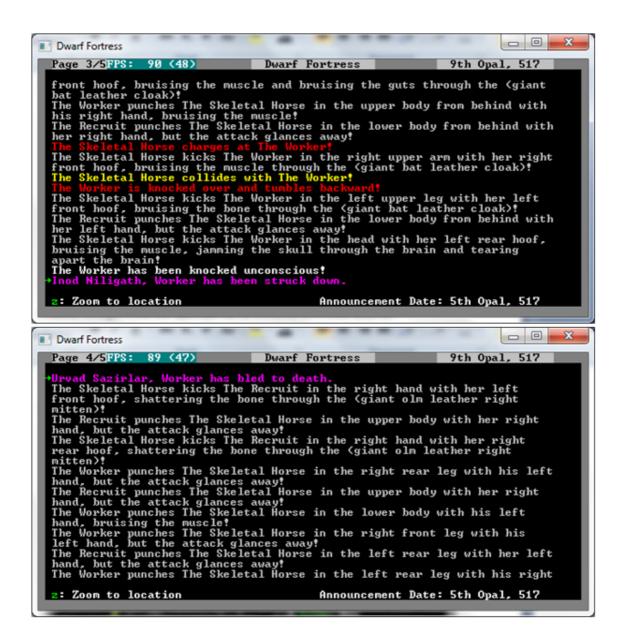
Derm got battered in a second cave-in.



He was fine and got back to work.



A skeletal horse got in, and was ripped apart by the militia, but not without casualties.



And then Olin got possessed...

And made this:

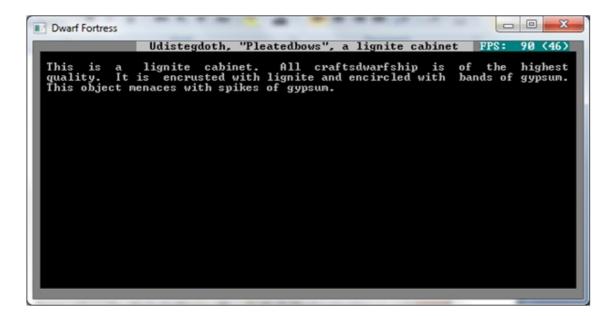
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Udistegdoth, "Pleatedbows", a lignite cabinet FPS: 90 (46)
Weight: 401

Basic Value: 4800

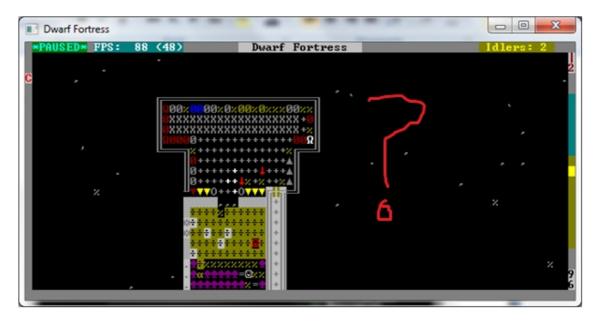
f: Forbid

h: Hide

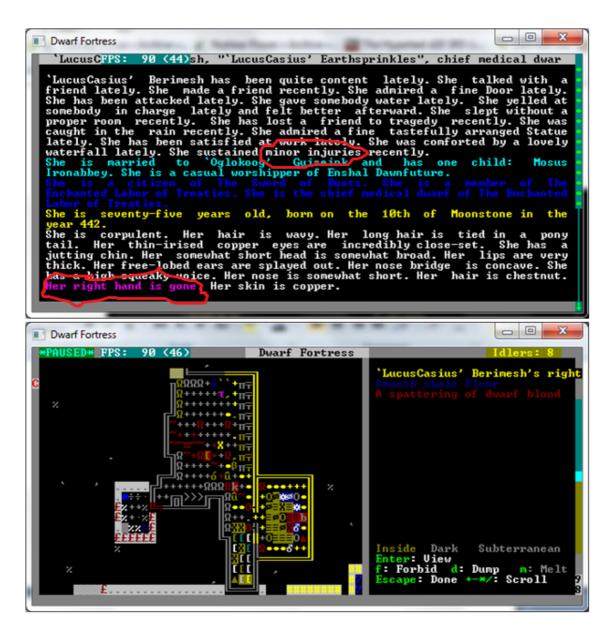
v: Description
```



On a completely different note, why is the staircase covered in swamp whiskey roasts?



Some kobold thieves got in. LucusCaisius tried to stop them. Hilarity ensued.



As my last legacy to Failcannon before I give up rulership, I made a lever. Read the notes before deciding whether to pull it.



So, a summary of the year:

Mist generator: worked, no-one died. Workshop levels: worked, no-one died. Dining room: didn't work, no-one died.

Kill skeletal horses: sorta worked, quite a few died. Build defensive wall: worked, 1 dead, 1 injured.

Artifacts: 2 worked, 1 didn't, 1 dead.

Dead forum dorfs: Urist the Red, Spanner, Andreus V, Glacial, Mipe, Vee. I now leave this in the capable(ish) hands of Lupusater.

TURN 3 – LUPUSATER

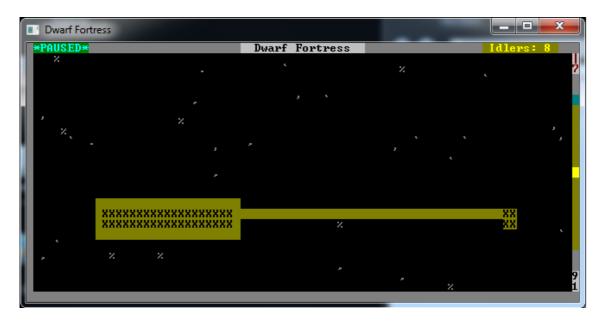
Same old, same old

Lupusater's Diary

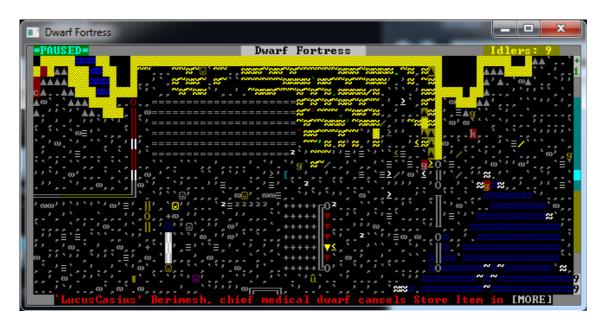
I was only minding my own business when suddendly this guy approaches me and tells me I'm the new boss. Oh well... will have to run with it.



First things first, the current staircase is being lowered another level and a shaft searching for caverns and magma will be dug.



To combat the miasma problem, I've arranged for an outside landfill. It is inside the walls, so it shouldn't cause problems except for the zombie groundhogs, which were quickly and painlessly dealt with.



Migrant wave! 18 dwarves, an accomplished miner, some smiths and little other. This brings our population to 51.

Found the first cavern layer and walled it off.



A woodworker died of infection.

The hippies have come. And Mekboy the broker is sleeping. Typical, really. When he awoke, we traded mostly for cloth. The elves wanted to stop our tree-felling. Told'em to mind their own business.

Somewhat uneventfully, spring has ended. I am hoping for a more exciting rest of the year.

Lur Thiefwitch's Tale

"Not even dreeams are safe from yooooooou. I alooone remain the saaame, when there's nooo one else to blaaaaaaame. Yet I haaad to ask, if ooonly so I'd aaalways know I haaad..."

A white-haired dwarf came over the hill with the corpse of a deer in one hand and a bloody rock in the other. He sang, in a voice like the smoke of a wagon after the canvas goes up in flames, as he walked along the well-trodden dirt that passed for Main Street in the ancient and venerable City of Graspedseduce.

Capital of Dastot Cog, framed by ancient goblin towers of pure obsidian, it was said to be the only city in the world with a constant hangover. Before rising to power, the elves and humans of the land had long since adopted the dwarven habit for drinking, which is to say it was preferred to water ten times out of ten and the children were born with a healthy appetite for it.

Dwarves seldom built taverns, since most dwarven fortresses are, in essence, great dusty taverns with overstocked pantries and excellent ale but nary a serving wench. Long ago, when Dastot Cot defeated the roving goblins and conquered Graspedseduce, the newly-freed humans needed a place to drink and address other bodily needs. Hence, the Inn of Seduction was built and disdained by most dwarves, who viewed the place as a grown man might view a child-sized gingerbread house.

Still, by local standards it was an upstanding establishment, with only a slight layer of grime on the cups and bedbugs that were relatively polite. One could find it filled with patrons at any hour of the day, and the old clock tower tolled the noon-o'-clock chime when a strange dwarf stepped into the tavern and gradually attracted the stares of everyone within. His beard was impeccably groomed, naked though he was aside from a few exceptionally hirsute patches of skin. Tracking mud with his

bare feet, still carrying the expired buck, the stranger approached the bartender, who was presently squeezing a zit on his upper chin and wiping the goo on his trousers.

With a great heave, the stranger plopped the deer's carcass across the counter, the immediate effect being a bloody mess spilling onto the floor from the animal's mouth. A nearby elf looked scandalized. The stranger looked at the bartender with eyes dark as pitch. "Beer," the dwarf said hoarsely.

The barkeep looked at the fresh kill, figured it was worth at least a few silver in meat, and filled a flagon from the tap. He filled a mug and passed it to the naked dwarf, grabbed the deer by the antlers, and dragged it outside to the adjacent butchery. The dwarf dropped the bloodied stone on the ground and drank desperately from his cup, then threw it away in favor of drinking from the flagon directly.

It was only a matter of time before someone would strike conversation with such a novel fellow, and before long one of the Inn's more flamboyantly dressed customers approached the dwarf, who had already drained his pitcher and was reaching over the bar in order to fill it.

"Excuse me, sir," said the man, rather certain about that last bit. "My name is Estun, and I—"

"How do you work this?" the dwarf asked, fiddling with the keg tap. "Ah, there it goes."

"—Right," said Estun. Estun was a newly popular sort of doctor that specialized in the analysis and containment of psychotic dwarves. He was a Psycho Analyst.

"Anyway," Estun continued, "I—"

"Lur," the dwarf interrupted.

"—Pardon?" said Estun with a quizzical look. The dwarf finished another gulp and wiped his mouth with his arm.

"My name is Lur," the dwarf said gruffly while he leaned forward to fill another pitcher. "What do you want? I'm in no mood for parlance."

"Ah." Estun was still smiling. This type of rude behavior was common in his profession and he'd learned to react to it with practiced patience. "Well, Lur, I was wondering where you came from."

"A time before time, a space before space," said the dwarf, after guzzling his fourth draught. "I get three more, yeah?!" he shouted to the barkeep, who nodded back at him nervously.

"I see," said Estun, who was nodding for a different reason. "I was wondering, Lur, have you ever heard of Battlefailed?"

Lur started laughing into his drink. With a soggy beard, he turned to Estun and smiled, and said, "I've heard of it."

"Have you come from Battlefailed, Lur?"

Lur poured the last of the booze into his mouth and said, "No, Estun. I did not come from Battlefailed, Estun. In fact, you can stop talking to me anytime you see fit, Estun, because I'm not mad, and I didn't lose my clothing on purpose, and you are profoundly annoying."

Estun kept smiling. Lur the Dwarf stood up, leaving an aromatic smear of blood and sweat on the seat, and strode toward the door. "I'll be back with more food!" he announced to the tavern as he went, trying to remember where Graspedseduce kept its fashion district.

Lupusater's Diary

Same old, same old. Found another cavern layer.

Possessed blacksmith!

He is using a single bar of rose gold... better than have him going mad, I suppose.

Now I'm puzzled. Is some supernatural entity saying that we will need crutches in the near future? And over 50k dwarfbucks? Whoa.

A skorse killed a gem setter, but our soldiers quickly took care of him.

MAGMA! The warm blood of Armok! But it's 80-100 levels down, so...

I've provided the exploratory shaft with a safety bridge. The lever controlling it is properly noted and connected.

Since we now have a Mayor, I've arrranged for quarters to be built for him.

Human traders! And Mekboy is off drinking... When he satiated his thirst, we traded for food, booze, metal bars and all kinds of raw glass. Glass and metal are to be kept as a safeguard for moods requiring them.

And summer has ended too.

Since the mayor's quarters will also be my own, I've arranged them with a special care.



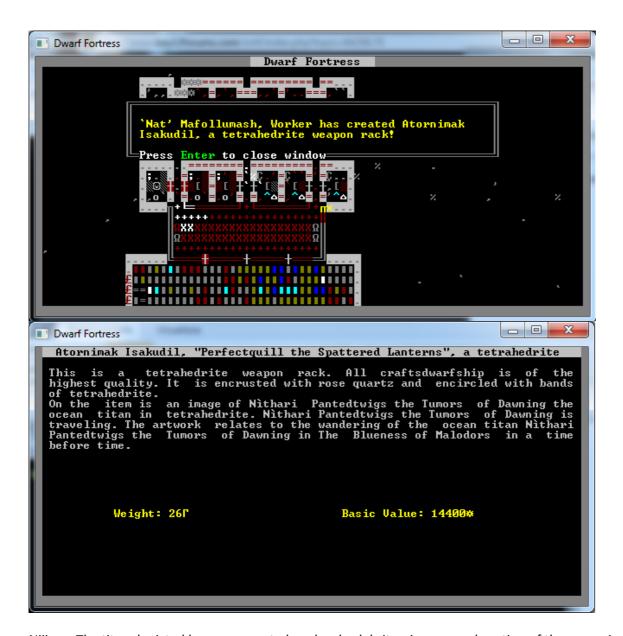


Oh shit... Luckily the cavern layers are sealed off.



The second one in two seasons? I hope this one doesn't churn out something like a crystal glass splint...

He claimed a Mason's workshop and he is using two boulders of tetrahedrite and a cut rose quartz.

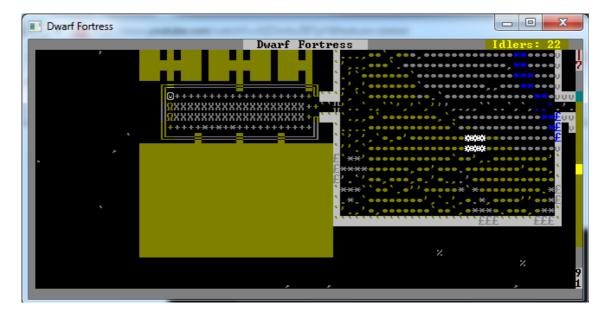


Niiice... The titan depicted here appears to be a local celebrity, since a good portion of the engravings here have him as a subject.

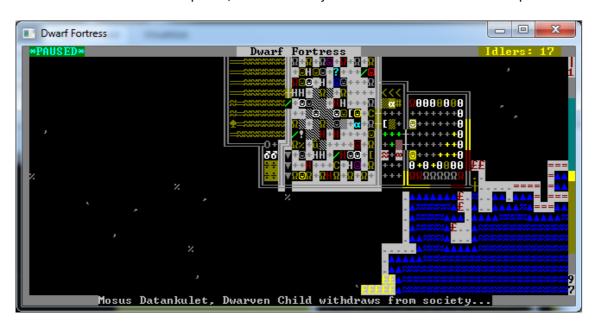
Since we are running out of stone, as strange as that may sound, the first part of the shaft will be expanded and become a full-fledged quarry, which doubled as a nice training for our miners.

The caravan from the mountainhomes has arrived! And Mekboy is out drinking and partying! Why I'm not surprised? When he bothered to do his damn work, we traded for food and booze. Since we are quite well-off, I requested only wood and booze.

The mayor mandated that we make crossbows, and since this is a relatively sane request, and we have a relatively skilled bowyer, I granted it. He is at risk though, he likes slade. He now stopped the export of crossbows.



I've created another workshop area, to be used for jewelers or whatever needs the space.



Another strange mood, the third this year! He seemed to want a craftsdwarf's workshop, so I built one and he promptly claimed it. He is using mica, cut claro opals, and rough cat's eyes.

Spring has come, and I've decided to retire from this extenuating role of Boss. It has been a good year, and I wish good luck to my successor.

Lur Thiefwitch's Tale

It took only seconds.

It began as a small ripple flowing out across the spacetime continuum, cleaving and doubling itself for every quantum mass it came upon, forking out for every bit of matter. In an instant, there were hundreds; in a few seconds, trillions. They were not so much ripples, by then, as they were a conglomerate wave of the myriad edges of Reality As It Was Known.

It reared about and towered over Aluonra, spreading into the sky like an invisible cancer. On the other side, things that resembled faces were taking shape: Hundreds strong, the parts of many beasts set in chimeric arrangement, howling madly beneath their astral veil. A plume of gray fire spat forth, and rising out of the ground where it struck came a titanic pillar of complete and utter blackness that blotted the sun from the sky. Its passing drew the earth beneath into the vacuum left behind.

It is said that approximately 1/100th of the multiverse's population is comprised of beings with the ken of magic. This includes wizards, warlocks, witches, sorcerers, psions, priests, gods, faeries, the enlightened, and the insane. They all looked into their respective skies, and in a rare moment of cross-dimensional unity, they each gasped as one.

It too took only seconds. The wave crashed.

Across the infinite times, massive tracts of land were ripped out of their planets and inverted, the soil tilling itself with geometric precision. Buildings were reduced to rubble. People of any age or race were thrown out into space as gravity worked out which way it should push.

In a forest at the edges of Graspedseduce, a dwarf clad only in deerskin and leather was tossed in the air to land in the lower branches of a tree. He yelled out a profanity as a current of wind whipped up from beneath and uprooted many of the smaller trees around. They circled around for a few moments before coming to rolling stop on the ground.

The devastation ran deep, though some places were spared the onslaught. Failcannon was once such place. Something about dwarves and their particular single-mindedness maintained a coherent sphere of existence around them. Their knowledge of the outside would come from those who dared to make the journey and tell them.

Lur blinked, trying to get the dust out of his watering eye. He clambered down the tree that somehow still stood, snagging the thong of his sandal on a jagged twig during descent. He fell with a start and hit the ground hard. Gritting his teeth as he stood, the dwarf picked up a pointed stick and used it to fish down his footwear.

"Marvelous," Lur muttered through dirt-speckled lips as he slipped the rogue sandal back on his foot. The cosmos were still ticking, but they were starting to shiver with fever. "Rotten bastards!" He yelled at the sky, fuming. The entire situation was entirely unfair. Existence was having a fatal case of the hiccups while he was stuck here in this meat body. It sickened him.

Yet he had the knowledge, a timeless trove, trapped in the recesses of his primate brain. It told him there was only one person who could help, who was within traveling distance and would actually believe he was who he was.

Lur sighed, took a long look at the upturned land all around him, and set out to the west, to Failcannon.

TURN 4 – LUCUS CASIUS

Hideous eldritch things

From the Journal of Lucus Casius, Chief Medical Dwarf

Today, as I was resting in bed, that fool Lupusater approached me with a well-crafted stone tablet. The thing appeared ancient, with many names written near the top, and at the bottom, a crude

image of dwarves toiling away in some forgotten pit. Much like this one would become, no doubt.

He handed me the tablet, and, laughing madly, ordered me to sign it with my right hand. I was perfectly prepared to batter him to death with what remained, but I held back. Mostly because I knew that I would soon find a better way to deal with him. Possibly something involving a forgotten beast, long hidden beneath the world.

That thought cheered me greatly, and I chiseled my name into the tablet with the sharp rock I keep for just such purposes. Then, with another insane laugh, he told me that I was now the Overseer of this hellish place! It was now my job to deal with the rest of these idiots and keep them from getting us all killed!

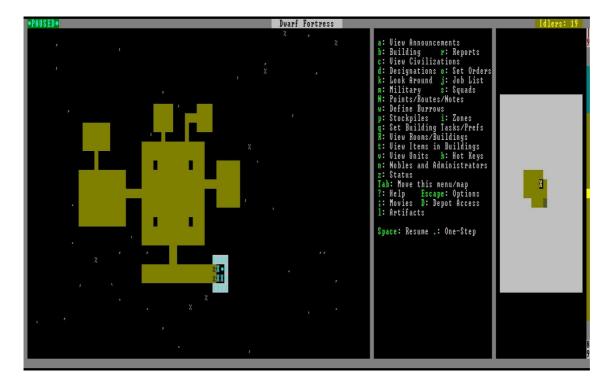
Why, it would take some kind of miracle worker just to get through another year of this!



I SWEAR TO WHATEVER DARK GOD MAY LISTEN THAT YOU WILL PAY, LUPUSATER!

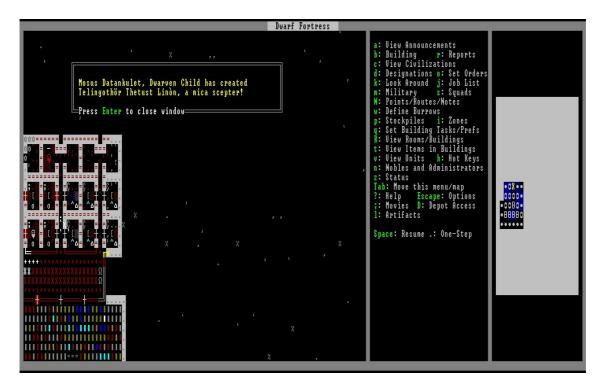
But for now, it looks like I have no choice but to assume my duties as Overseer of this miserable heap of rock on the shore of a demon-cursed ocean.

First things first, I had to flaunt my power as had others before me. I ordered the mining out of new rooms which would be my personal quarters.



It's a fair start.

Oh, and some excellent news, not long after beginning construction!



A true prodigy, making such a marvellous scepter! Once he reaches adulthood, who can tell what wonders he will make?

I'm taking that scepter, by the way. Even if I have no idea how I'm going to carry both it and my child at the same time without my right hand. Stupid kid. Stupid Kobolds.

In a fit of nostalgia for my lost extremity, I have ordered another construction. A tower, which, when fully built, will have roughly the same proportions of my glorious right arm, hand included.



It will take some time, but I am confident that, if I suspend all of the other actives, we can accomplish it before the end of the year.

I had a dream last night.

The stone tablet on which my name was carved lay in the center of my new bedroom. Outside, the fortress was completely silent, not even the pounding of picks against rock or a late night drinking contest. I remember being confused by this, as a true fortress, even one like FailCannon, is never quiet.

I recall stumbling to the center of the room, drawn, despite my growing sense of dread, to the tablet. As I approached, the writing began to glow with a strange, otherworldly light. I saw terrifying creatures- hideous, eldritch things- twisting before my vision, crying out as they did in fell tongues.

I picked up the tablet, despite the warnings. The words themselves twisted like the beasts, forming words in a long-forgotten tongue. I was more frightened by this than I was of the monsters, I think. Were it only that the language was unreadable, not just forgotten. For I understood the letters as clearly as humans understand the concept of night and day.

I shall not write here what was written within the depths of my unconscious spirit, lest it fill yet another with madness and despair. If I had not then heard the voice, I would likely even now be trapped in the torment of unwaking nightmares. As it was, I felt a sudden sensation of calm in the darkness, and, as I turned, a gentle voice spoke.

"Lucus-of-the-Hand, you have seen before you what the future holds, and, by our grace, remain unbroken. You have been given a chance. Pave the way for one who can fix the Seal. This is your

duty."

Before I could ask who the voice was, or what the Seal was, or how the hell I was supposed to "pave the way," I awoke.

...I have to get back to work.



Work on my room is coming along nicely. It takes my mind off the dream, at least.

Oh, and the mayor asked me to make crossbows.

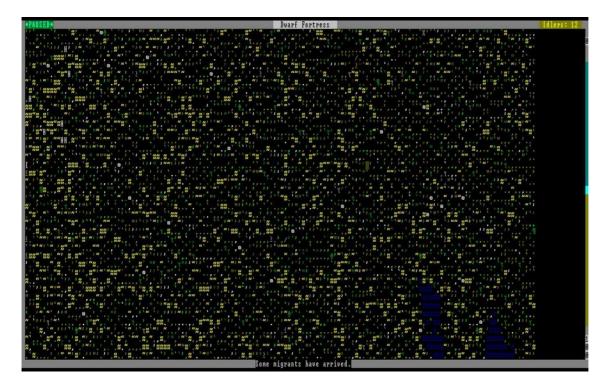
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Ouned Objects: 31

Holdings: Opulent Throne Roon Needs: Decent Office
Grand Belroon Needs: Decent Office
Grand Daining Boon Needs: Decent Office
Grand Daining Boon Needs: Decent United Boon
2 Chests Needs: 2 Chests
1 Gabinet Needs: 1 Gabinet
1 Weapon Rock Needs: 1 Gabinet
1 Weapon Rock Needs: 1 Weapon Rock
1 Weapon Rock Needs: 1 Weapon Rock
Mandates: Wake crossbous (2/2)

Enter: Thoughts and preferences h: Health r: Relationships g: Custonize
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A perfectly understandable request, really. Who doesn't like shooting things? Nobody, that's who... ...and I feel like they could be useful in the days ahead.

Oh, and more news! Some migrants have arrived!



A Gem Cutter (Drafted)... Who promptly planted himself there and did not move. I stopped paying attention after the first couple of days of him just being there.

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You have struck gold opal!

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xo forbared linthbus, fittalerafter cancels Drew Drink: Heeds empty

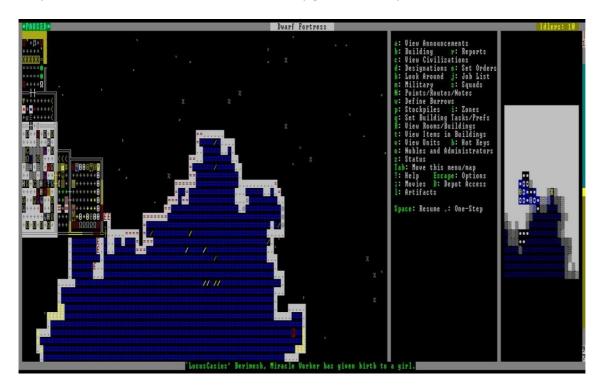
xo forbared linthbus, fittalerafter cancels Drew Drink: Heeds empty

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You have struck
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Deciding that my workers needed a bit of a break, I told them to have fun for a bit.

Why did I do that? Hell if I know, but I feel really good about myself now.



I take that back. I AM IN HORRIBLE HORRIBLE PAIN.

Two worthless children, and only one arm. What a waste of my time...

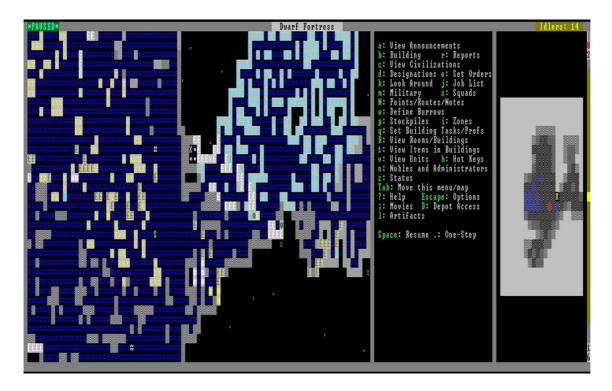
I'll deal with this problem later. Now that I've had a few minutes to rest up, I should get back to my duties.

...unfortunately, before I could do that, some pointy-eared morons jumped us from the trees, threatening me with rolls of cloth! The fiends!

Bloody elves. Always getting in the good dwarf's way, preventing me from doing the work of the gods...

I ordered Mekboy to go haul some of our garbage out and force the idiots to cart it away. Hell, they'd probably even trade for it. Suckers.

A nameless miner ran up to me and informed me that it was too dangerous to go down to mine out an area to be used for magma forging. When I asked why, he informed me that there was a forgotten beast in a perfect position to kill workers.



...Screw these idiots. Back to bed for the day.

TURN 5 - CAPPSTV

Fetus Head Smash Festival

The Cappstv Letters

Prologue:

"Led, there is an old man who wants to see you."

"Can't you see that I planning the 'Fetus Head Smash Festival'! This is going to be the first one so it has to be perfect!"

"Led, this old man says he has info on what cause the, well the..."

"Spit it out!"

"The event."

"I AM PLANNING AN EVENT RIGHT NOW! AND THIS ONE INVOLVES DWARFVEN FETUS HEAD SMASHIN!"

"The one where everything flip."

The Queen steps back from the practice fetus as she puts down her hammer.

"Oh, that event. Bring him in."

The old man walked into the room grasping his hip. Led stared deep in the man's eyes.

"What do you know."

"I know everything about the events that are going on in our world. But I can only tell so much."

"THEN TELL IT!"

"FailCannon."

"The fort? What about it?"

"How many eyes do you have there?"

"Well, uhh, well. SERVANTS! FETCH ME THE DWARF THAT IS IN THE CELLS! TELL HER THAT SHE HAS A CHANCE AT FREEDOM! BRING ME CAPPSTV!"

The first letter:

Dear Queen Led,

Like oh my god FailCannon is so awesome! I found like a boyfriend and his name is Mekboy! Isn't that a cute name! Kigok Pokercooks (that's my deity just in case you didn't know!) probably bestow on me this super cool future husband! Also I got tons of friends here! They all seem to like me so much that they made me the overseer! Ain't that neat! Anyway I will tell you if I found out any stuff about what you wanted me to found out about!

From,

Cappstv

The Queen's reply:

Dear Cappstv,

You have been making friends and having sex instead of doing the task I assigned to you? Must I remind you of the cold dark cell that I free you from? I want information about the going ons in FailCannon. So supply them to me.

From,

Queen Led

PS.

The reason why the ink is red is because it was made from fetus blood. We have of lot of that stuff here now.

Letter 2

Cappstv speaks of the Condition of the Fortress

Dear Queen Led,

Ewww! Fetus blood is gross silly goose! Whatcha you doing with that anyway! But back on to the topic on hand, I shall tell you about the condition of the fortress! Like woah, its pretty cool here! There are 64 dwarfs, coutin' myself of course, that live here and none of them are really suspicious! I know because I been looking for suspicious people since I got here! Anyway our current food stores is 2258! We dwarfs like to drink but our Ale grows low, oh my! So I am going to be the boss and order them to make some more ok! Another sad thing is that we don't have our own rooms! So I will fix that up right away! Oh yeah its now officially summer time! Isn't that great! Write you later alligator!

From,

Cappstv

Queen Led Replies to Cappstv's Last Message and Offers Some Helpful Advice

Dear Capptard,

I am this close to sending someone over there to impregnate you and take the fetus from your womb and add it to the "Fetus Smashing Festival".

From,

Queen Led

The goings of the gods

Meanwhile, some billion meters *ana*, a few hundred yards *kata*, in another dimension, another meeting is held.

Someone is hiding something, the goddess Kigok Pokercooks thought to herself, which isn't redundant when all of your peers can hear all the thoughts that aren't specifically private.

She sat at an ornate table in a hunched position, staring at her fellow deities through steepled fingers, as well as the deities who could never, by any leap of imagination, be considered her fellows; they were nemeses, but temporary allies for a common endeavor.

A goddess spoke and interrupted her musings. "The tremors are increasingly unpredictable over time." Kigok eyed the speaker. Limul was a crow-like woman, with long, clawed fingernails and a small, sharply pointed nose. Her hair was tied up in an ornate adamantine clasp, and she carried an angry-looking war hammer made of something that looked like gold.

She went on, saying, "The Seal weakens daily. Lucus-of-the-Hand still lives, but a melancholy has taken him, and the tower remains unfinished. There are new horrors tearing into the mortal planes from the abyssal veil with every passing moment." She paused to pull out a map of the cosmos that looked vaguely like a human child with chicken pox, if an anthill looks vaguely like an asteroid belt.

A human deity of fishing from some backwater dimension interrupted. "None of my constituents have been arriving in Limbo unharmed," she said. "Any who do make it are waylaid or injured by the ones who don't."

"It's intolerable," chirped a bird-like goddess of rebirth from Aluonra. "All the recent stillborns have caused unspeakable misery across the world. Or, most of the world, anyway."

"And Lur?" Sahed asked sheepishly, brushing some rainbow dust of his shoulders. "I hope he isn't lost in transit after he perishes. I wish to have words with him." Sahed licked his lips in a way that implied these words would involve a great deal of pain and begging for mercy.

"Lur is somehow alive," said Kigok, with some resentment in her voice. "But if he can find the sorcerer before it's too late, we might have an easy solution to this mess."

"That's quite an if," said Otik the Blueness of Flickers, as he rubbed his mountainous forehead with fingers like tree trunks.

"Have faith," said Kigok in a strange, faraway voice.

Thoth the godling, who would eventually become Watcher of Aluonra in Lur's stead, now held the All-Seeing Eye that the former god had kept in his All-Seeing Tree. Thoth preferred to house the artifact in a stuffed peacock, which he had dubbed, appropriately enough, the All-Seeing Bird. Peering into the dark passage beyond the bird's yawning mouth, the young god spoke out. "There's a giant blue turtle eating some lizard people."

"Not now, Thoth," said Kigok, shaking her head at him.

Thoth frowned. "But they're in pain. They're asking for our help."

Every god and goddess in the chamber groaned. It was a question every godling would eventually ask: "Why can't we help the sad mortals?" Kigok knew it was time for Thoth to get "the talk" about the Rules, but it would have to wait until later.

"They're bad lizard people," she lied soothingly. "Very bad. Now please, Thoth, no more eyeball until after the meeting."

Thoth looked concerned, but nodded and tucked the bird under his seat. Kigok noticed the discomfort in the minds of her fellow deities and tried to think of something motivational to say.

"Forgive me," said a walrus with a top hat, "but what is the point of continuing this meeting if all we are to do is sit on our flippers? I say to Hell with the Rules. Let's roll into town and make some noise."

Kigok sighed. She decided on saying, "There is a chance Lur will survive long enough to succeed. He knows what he must do now that he is part of the mortal realm." She paused, sighed. "But there is someone else that resembles him an awful lot who is about to cause quite a stir in our world. Claims to have intimate knowledge of recent events. And I can't read him, none of us can. His mind is a..." She searched for the word, "... a whiteness."

She stared hard at the walrus. He looked so silly, so harmless. Dangerous assumptions, she scolded herself. She met eyes with him, and gave him her most urgent smile. "The point is unity before this crisis," she said. "And entering the worlds would mean disaster, especially now. Probability won't withstand that kind of firepower."

"You have enjoyed dominating this meeting," came a voice that chilled even the ichor of the gods. "Yet I have not spoken. Are we not all equals here?"

Kigok knew all about this one. Her name was Ura, and her name was Death. Fleshless and robed, she sat on an obsidian throne that hovered upside down, giving the impression of a torso protruding from the ceiling.

"Do not distract from this topic, Ura," said Kigok in warning. "Or do you have reasons for doing so?"

"The old man is my prophet," Ura said through her ever-grinning teeth.

There was an uproar. Gods simply did not send prophets without securing the proper authorization. It was forbidden, and just plain rude.

"You're too much like your father, Ura!" screamed Harod the God of Sod over a concert of shouting. "The same hubris. And even more impetuous!"

"Not everyone in Mother Kigok's order are meek enough to wait out this catastrophe," was Ura's reply, and her skeletal grin miraculously widened.

I Thirst, said a voice so hideous, so awfully vile, that horror took the entire room in such a way that only gods may feel: a preternaturally villainous voice as vicious as the biting abyss beyond time, a voice that dripped with utter hatred for existence, older than it, greater than it, the fatherless skin of evil itself.

A phantasmal shadow manifested in the chamber, surrounding Ura's skeletal frame, embracing it, adding eyes of etheric slime to empty sockets. It enveloped her limbs which presently throbbed like an exposed and yet beating heart, and a darkness congealed around her as the tiles of the chamber ceiling peeled away into nothingness.

Thoth cried out and fled from the chamber with a flash of light. The worry of the remaining gods echoed in their collective minds, and their thoughts were as One as instantly as they'd thought they should so be.

'The Foul One? Here! How?'

I Thirst, said the unfathomable voice that crept around the room like the hungry tendrils of a colossal squid. The unified mind of the gods focused on their most ancient enemy, a golden light filling the room and clashing with the spread of darkness bleeding into their sanctum. Their physical forms flickered and faded as their concentration narrowed in on the battle of wills.

"You will not disturb this Sanctum, Old One," said the gods. 'Ura, what have you done?'

Ura said nothing. The voice behind her did not speak, but hissed with the rattling sound of millions dying in pools of their own life. The light in the chamber flared as fire and lightning rained from above. An arc of frenzied energy shot out and struck the wall, and the entire structure around them shimmered and vanished, replaced by an utter, yawning cavern of chaotic proto-reality and preshapes, without meaning or any discernible form.

The gods were troubled. This was all very new to most of them.

They had to abandon the Sanctum, they realized. The Foul One had taken them by surprise and they hadn't reacted soon enough to win this battle. The best they could manage was an infinite stalemate. They knew it, and couldn't afford it. Retreat was the only option they could take.

Hells and damnations, they thought.

And then they were gone. Pitch, fetid tendrils of protoplasm crawled into countless realities like the blood of gods dripping down the walls of space itself. Ura grinned, and her grin grew to fill the entirety of the Sanctum.

Far away on Aluonra, Lur panicked. He was drowning.

Letter 3

The Fetus Head Smash Festival

"Your highness, a letter from the dwarven spy Cappstv!"

"I will read it later, don't you know its time for the opening ceremony of the 'Fetus Head Smash' you worthless piece of trash!"

"Sorry my Queen."

The servant quickly scatter away as Led raise up her golden hammer as if to hit him. Led smiled after he left the room.

Fanfare played as Led ascended the stairs to the platform. There was a masterfully crafted table with a single fetus placed on top of it. The Queen stood facing the crowd and gave the signal to stop the music. She waited until every eye was on her and then she began her speech, "The title of this event is 'Fetus Head Smash Festival'. Just to inform everyone who might be offended, we shall only be smashing the fetuses of lesser species. That is all." The gold hammer swung down.

The old man was in the crowd, grasping his hip. He was smiling. He spoke to himself in a low whisper, "Led, when all of this is over It won't matter if you are a dwarf or a human." As he walk away from the crowd he stop grasping his hip. There was no point in pretending when out of sight. He walked right through a shadow and arrived outside the ruins of Battlefailed. Staring around at his surroundings he sat cross legged on the ground and began to whistle.

Letter 4

Cappstv writes to Led about stuff

Dear Queen Led,

Have you ever wonder where the gods came from? If they were created, then what created them? And if a god could be created, does that mean a god could be destroyed? I don't know why I bother myself with such silly thoughts, but if Kigok Pokercooks were to suddenly be destroyed I wouldn't know what to do. But this is all just silly talk! Running a fortress is very stressful, and when I get get stress out my mind likes to think of silly things. Anyway like things are going fine over at the fort even though I am very stress out! Like so great some kid threw a party! It was kinda lame being a kid party but it still was a party!

Also I made an art galley for engravings and stuff!

The Child and the Old Man

"What are you doing here mister?"

"Thinking. And you?"

The old man didn't had to ask, he already knew the reason. He knew the child would come, and he knew why the child had come, and he knows what they will do next. He was just doing it for conversation.

"Playing chess. Want to play with me?"

The boy produce a board and sat it down on the ground before the old man could even say yes. The old man slowly got up and walk over. He sat back down and stare at the board. The boy never lost a chess game in his life. That is why he came here, no one back home would play with him. And the old man knew the boy would beat him. Because the old man would let him.

Led Replies to Cappstv's last letter

Dear Cappstv,

Wow, what wonderfully profound thoughts! Maybe you should publish a book! NOW STOP THINKING ABOUT STUPID THINGS AND GET BACK TO SPYING!

From,

Queen Led

Letter 5

Cappstv gets back to spying, well kinda

Dear led,

I took your excellent advice and decided to try to get my journal publish! Oh and the saddest thing happen the other day! It turns out some guy die of thirst cause we had no buckets! We actually 3 dwarfs died. Actually I think that was 5 dwarfs. Maybe 6. The good news is that no more people will die cause the carpenter is making buckets! Oh wait, while writing this letter I was inform another one died. Good grief. This is rather sad.

Oh and then there is Vafe! Its a giant 3 eyed lobster beast thing. Everyone is afraid its going to kill us, but I think he looks cute! Besides how would it even get in? Also on a far more pleasant note, Lupusater has given birth! Well my golly another one has died of thirst! Now this just doesn't make

sense! Its making me really sad. And what do you know another one has died! Oh my god every time I write a new sentence another person dies of thirst! I don't see why they keep on saying they can't use the buckets! Oh my god another person died! I don't know whats wrong! I am the worst overseer ever! I somehow spent the whole month writing this letter to you!

From,

Crying Cappstv

Led says something comforting

Dear Cappstv,

This is the best new I heard out of FailCannon yet. Thanks for telling me about it.

From Led

The Aftermath of the Chess Game

"Checkmate!"

"How does it feel to win a game fairly?"

The boy's expression of glee crawled back into oblivion. No one ever knew his secret.

"How do you know?"

"I know a lot of things. So much, if you were able to read my mind, your little head would probably explode."

"Is that why your mind is like...a whiteness? So you can stop my head from exploding?" "No."

The old man's eyes turn wild and he pounced on top the boy. His bony hands began to grasp around the boys neck. A few moments latter the boy was dead. He got back on his feet and stare at the dead body.

"Well kid, at least you died proud to win a game without reading someone's mind. Even though I had to let you win." He glance back at the chess board. "Only a few more left to dispose of. Next stop shall be in FailCannon."

The old man sat back down.

"Now isn't the time. But soon it will be."

Letter 6

The last Letter of Summer

Dear Led,

I fixed the problem I think. It turns out that I said buckets instead of barrels when I told the carpenters what to build. Opps. And even after I fix that people are still dying of thirst! I am a terrible overseer. But I can't be that bad if I have the best art gallery ever! I hear that every engraving that Oglo and Mac make are masterpieces, so this is going have to be good! Oh, a human caravan has just arrived! Write you later!

The Old Man Arrives in FailCannon

It was raining when he arrived. The old man watch as Sithe Nifihrith slowly made his way across the land and suddenly stop as if he was a statue. Sithe was a human merchant, there to trade goods. But now he appear to be nothing more then a statue. He stood there in the rain, for days. And the old man stood there, watching him and the fortress.

Then it happen. An ambush.

A goblin ambush. 3 Dwarfs were outside heading to meet the merchant to see what was wrong. In a matter of seconds one of them was already dead and the other 2 were injury and on the run. Their screams could be heard inside the fortress. Now it was time to test The Gilded Lances. Meanwhile Lordslowpoke and dragonshadez decided to get married. The old man shook his head at the wonder

of the dwarfs, and with perfect timing brought his head up to see the arrival of the another second ambush. Maybe it is not the time to test The Gilded Lances. The second dwarf was struck down. But wait, where are The Gilded Lances? As it turns out there is a bridge blocking their pathway so they couldn't exactly kick anyone's butt. That is until they ordered someone to bring it down.

"The bridge is brought down.

The weather clears.

And they all rush out."

Said the Old man.

When I say they all rush out, I just don't mean The Gilded Lances. I mean the majority of the fort decided to rush outside. The old man shakes his head in wonderment, of course he already saw this coming, but it still somehow shock him. Normal civilians with no military training just rushing outside for what during a goblin ambush for what?

Somehow kobold thieves even enter the fray now. "Oglokoog must be taking a break from his engravings and throwing a tantrum now." Whisper the old man to himself. The old man turns back to the fighting. And then it was suddenly over. Blood of all types mix in the ground. Goblin, human, and dwarf. Corpses litter the grounds.

The old man walks through a shadow and arrives some place else.

Scrawled Journal Entry, Undated

The stars.

The stars are fading, dying like the last one remaining in Lur's constellation. A blackness is seeping across the sky, visible to my eyes even during the light of day. All but twelve stars. Ura's stars now burn bright with the most vile and unwholesome candesence. Something truly cataclysmic has taken place in the land of the gods, and while the dwarves here toil in meaningless obscurity at the behest of an insane, genocidal human queen trying to recreate what was lost at Battlefailed, the entire multiverse is collapsing around us.

I think I've finally found a problem that is truly, utterly beyond my power to fix. We're all going to never have existed.

That being said, while I still do exist, I'm going to have a drink. A very, very strong drink.

After the Massacre

"Oh my god! How did this happen! How many are dead!"

"A lot. Do you want to include all those who died of thirst outside the fort?"

"They died outside the fort? But I was told there was a bridge blocking the entrance to... Oh my god! They didn't died because we had enough buckets, they died because they couldn't get back in the fort!"

"Yep."

"Who is among the dead?"

"Well there is Thatdude, Madjax, Pisano, Elt, Gilgameshclone, and Mekboy."

Cappstv turned pale.

"What was that last one again?"

"Mekboy."

Turkey XIV watched as Cappstv began to cry hysterically.

Letter 7

The First Letter of Sad Autumn Dear Queen Led,

I am writing for Cappstv in her absence. She told me all about how she is a spy between her fits of crying and ask me to inform you of the going ons in the fort.

Hey has been a goblin ambush not too long ago, that took many lives. This massacre took the life of one Mekboy, who I am sure Cappstv inform you, who was her lover. Now that Mekboy is dead, Cappstv has suffer a mental breakdown. And she is not the only one. As of now I would say about 6 dwarfs are throwing tantrums. The most repeat offender for the tantrum throwing is one Nightmarebros.

I am also regret to inform you that 2 dwarfs have been shucked by terrible grief.

This is all I have to report so far.

From Turkey XIV Mayor of Failcannon

Led denies that Cappstv is a Spy
Dear Turkey XIV,
Cappstv is not a spy! That is silly! But thanks for informing me of the going ons in one of my forts!

From, Queen Led

This Old Man...

"...came rolling home." The body stop rolling at the bottom of the hill near the home. The old man who stood directly atop of the hill smiled. It was almost over. "Just one more to go," he said to himself. Indeed there was just one more to go.

The old man was on a mission. And no matter what he would complete his mission, because you can't change the future.

"One more to go."

Meanwhile, in an alternate timeline...

Dinner With Queen Led

"Good and evil are two things that I can assure you that do in fact exist!" Queen Led sighed, she knew inviting a philosopher and a high priest would be a bad idea. "Good and evil are simply ideas, and nothing more. There can be no true evil and no true good. Who can decides what is evil and what is good?" The priest was now enraged and shouted, "Who else but the gods!" The philosopher shook his finger at the high priest, "Last I check there wasn't a god of evil or a god of good." The Queen took a bit out of her piece of bread. She almost had enough of this. "You simply amaze me! How can you not believe in good or evil!" The philosopher once again shook his finger at the priest, "Because every man has his own detention of good and evil." Queen Led had enough. "Stop with this conversation, it bores me." The priest's head went down in shame. "Aww, sorry my queen, if you don't mine my asking, what is your views on the subject." Led swallowed and replied, "I believe there is no pure good in the world. But I do believe there is such a thing as pure evil." Seconds later a servant arrived with a letter from FailCannon.

Letter 8

Turkey XIV's Second Letter To Led Dear Queen Led,

Miasma plagues the fortress. The tantrums are never ending, and there is always at least one going on. Cappstv has been seeing the closest thing we have to a therapist. I was shown some of her poems and I still remember one.

I am rather sad

Cause Mekboy is now dead

I cut myself now

These are not good signs I think. Besides the decaying mental health of my peers we seem to be doing alright. Well actually that is a lie. We are doing terrible. Everyone goes a little mad sometimes, but we are all going mad right now.

From

Turkey

Mayor of FailCannon

Led's Response

Dear Turkey,

Wow that is all very interesting. I can't wait to write about it in my journal. Now I am going to finish my meal.

From,

Queen Led

Letter 9

The First Letter of Winter Dear Queen Led,

Lur and Andreus have been strucked by melancholy. I fear Cappstv may suffer the same faith. Our days in FailCannon have been reduce down to grief and anger. Our numbers have dwindle down to 39.

I have just been inform that Andreus has just been struck down. Our numbers are now down at 38. I weep for the children who must grow up in such a climate. Its winter now, and I don't know if we will survive this one.

From Turkey Mayor of FailCannon

Led's Reply

Dear Turkey,

Can you stop being so over dramatic? If I wanted to read serials I would read a serial. My patience with you is running thin.

From,

Queen Led

Letter 10

The Final Letter From Turkey

Dear Queen Led

LLSDFSTSDFSHSFDSEKLKMLPFADFWEROSFVSUSSDFSDCOSDEWRMLSDFWEBUOGDFSGNSDFSFSVBCX E!

The Gypsum Cabinet

During the chaos one dwarf withdrawn from society to create a artifact. The artifact which was created was a gypsum cabinet menace with spikes of gypsum. A cabinet. But this cabinet represented something. It had order. In a time of chaos one dwarf made something that defy the chaos. This cabinet came to be known as "The Veiled Rivers". It was a sign of hope.

The Old Man and Cappstv

Ledi was known as a crazy cat lady. And the first thing the Old Man saw when he arrived at FailCannon was her going mad. How appropriate, he thought. The Old Man hid in the shadows and waited. The zombie and skeletal horses came. Lucus, Sprout, Lupusater, and Cappstv quickly were killed. It was Cappstv who the old man came for. The old man made his way toward's Cappstv's corpse. He was shock to find that it wasn't exactly a corpse, but that Cappstv was still somewhat alive. "Thats not suppose to happen." He pulls out his knife when Cappstv speaks in a voice that isn't her own, "Old Man, the future you have seen is just one of many possibilities."

The old man slices the throat of Cappstv, but the voice is still there, "What was the purpose of killing that young boy? Or the several other murders you committed in last months? What is the purpose of making sure Cappstv dies?" The old man replied, "I don't know," and walked away. He went through a shadow as a siege engineer began his murderous rampage. He would end up killing Twobeard, mrgrinshpon, Dariush, and FelcisGreenshirt. After that 3 goblin snatchers will steal 3 children. And then after that a goblin ambush. Vastly out numbering the dwarfs, there will be slaughter. When spring arrives there is only one dwarf left. He will soon be slaughtered also.

Back in the main timeline...

The Ripple

If one were to change the future they would also change the past.

The old man woke up with a vision. For as long as he could remember he always receive these visions, one every few seasons. But this time it was different. In the future the old man saw, the future was changed. And how was one suppose to follow a future in which he isn't suppose to believe will be changed?

Lunch With Queen Led

"Good and evil are two things that do in fact exist! I can assure you of this!" Queen Led sighed, she knew inviting a philosopher and a high priest would be a bad idea. "Good and evil are simply ideas, and nothing more. There is no such thing as true evil and no true good. Who can decide what is evil and what is good?" The priest was now enraged and shouted, "Who else but the gods themselves!" The philosopher shook his head at the high priest, "Last I check there wasn't a god who decides what is evil and good." The Queen took a sip of her soup. She almost had enough of this. "You simply amaze me! How can you not believe in good or evil!" The philosopher once again shook his head at

the priest, "Because every man has his own detention of good and evil." Queen Led had enough. "Stop with this conversation, it bores me." The priest's head went down in shame. "Aww, sorry my queen, if you don't mine my asking, what is your views on the subject." Led swallowed and replied, "Neither exists. I use to believe in pure evil, but if such a thing were to exist then it must have its opposite." The philosopher smiled, and took another drink of his poisonous wine. Of course, he had no clue it was poisonous. Seconds later a servant arrived with a letter from FailCannon.

Letter 8 again

Turkey's Second Letter to Queen Led... Well kinda.

Dear Queen Led,

SethCreiyd has gone mad and I fear cappstv shall loose her head too. Recently she has been seeing the closet thing we have to a therapist here. Well as it turn out cappstv has been writing poetry recently, well you have a look yourself.

Today I will cry

for my darling one, mekboy

I think i shall die

Rather depressing stuff right?

Anyway I must get back to work, NightmareBros was apparently just murdered.

From,

Turkey

Mayor of Battlefailed

Journal of SethCreiyd, final entry

dwarf of little consequence

The stars are gone! Where are the stars? I see, yes, I SEE, YES! The End approaches its beginning. The walls draw clothes. IT will ALL end, ALL OF IT

What I've seen, WHAT I'VE SEEN! The TEETH of the end! The land itself is the enemy.

Soon it will be too late I must, yes, nobody trusts me, why don't they ever look away?

The Cappstv Letters

It awaken. It only awaken when trouble was afoot. It was watching, listening.

"What did you do to him?"

"The old man believes he can see the future. No one can. All he is gifted with is Ura's vision for the future. Ura is a very good guesser, but Ura never thought I would get past the defenses he put in the old man's mind. All I had to do was plant a seed of doubt, show him that not everything will go as plan."

"That's clever even for a goddess!"

It decided to go back to sleep. Whatever is going on, it could wait just for a moment.

Letter 9

The Last Letter

Dear Queen Led,

It is me again, cappstv. Just to let you know this will be my last letter. Mekboy's death has brought me back to reality. And what a horrible place reality is.

I spent the last few months watching my peers decay. We are all angry here, some of us mad. Seth has committed suicide and Lucus is babbling randomly. Do you know how hard it is to watch the people you spent a good part of your life die? And to die not by the hands of a goblin, but the hands of a fellow dwarf?

And then there is this. Me sending letters to someone who cares, not ever directly asking for help, but still screaming for some form of support.

And the worst thing of all, I am spying on my fellow dwarfs without even knowing the reason why.

Now if you excuse me, I got a fortress to run. It appears melkorp and Ledi has just gone stark raving mad and dragonshardz has been stricken by melancholy.

From Cappstv PS Go to hell.

Led reaction to this last letter

"I know who is going to get knocked off. Servants, fetch me a hit man and a dwarf who has no issues with spying."

The Old Man and Cappstv

"A dwarf went mad the other day. When he awoke and killed a small child and an armorer. The mad man was quickly struck down, bringing our numbers down to 31." The line was of course lost on Cappsty, who had gone completely mad a few days before.

"LucusCasius has died of thirst. That brought our numbers down to 30. And then Twobeard died too. Capps are you paying attention? Capps? Aww, this is pointless!"

Sprout walk away. He would throw a tantrum later because of this and eventually go mad himself. It would be some time after that the old man arrives.

When the old man arrived just after FelcisGreenshirt, Andreus VI, Sprout, and Lur were all struck down by an insane dwarf. Everything was different from his vision. Everything was changed. The old man found cappstv's corpse. It didn't spoke to him. There were no answers here. And so the question remained.

Why is he meant to do this?

TURN 6 - GLACIAL

Welcome back

Frosty's Log

1st Granite, 520 – Failcannon

Mother,

Years have passed since we have heard from Aunt Glacial. I traveled to Failcannon at your request, to discover what had become your dear sister. Now I know why she has not written.

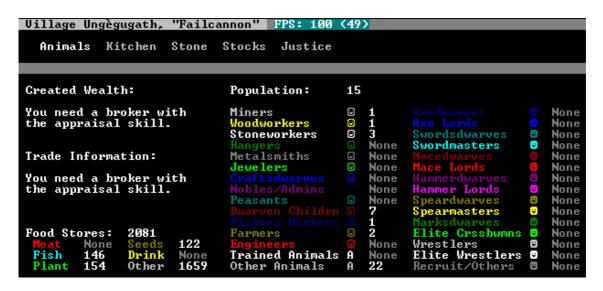


Nothing is well here in Failcannon. I have taken to writing poetry to pass the time between when I am screaming or being screamed at. Here is my latest effort:

Slate is the cruellest month, breeding Sweet pods out of the dead land, mixing Memory and desire, stirring Dull roots with spring rain.

I feel I have tapped into some essential theme. If the screaming stops, and I lose the urge to throw plump helmet roasts hither and yon, I may continue to write.

In other news, I have appointed myself overseer of this fortress of Failcannon. The previous overseer is still about, but I have not seen her leave her coffin in days. I suppose she is dead. This is my domain:



_2nd Granite, 520

Winter kept us warm, covering Earth in forgetful snow, feeding A little life with bloated tubers.

```
Spring has arrived!
→ Dariush' Berlulâr, Cook has given birth to a boy.
```

I have named him Sweet Pod. Dariush seems surprised, but happy. She has stopped screaming. I think she thought she was a boy, and was very surprised to have a child. For reasons I do not quite understand, I would call her Tiresias, if her name wasn't Dariush. I have forgotten why.

_3rd Granite, 520

As overseer, I feel it is crucial that I make some decisions. First, I have appointed myself to all available positions in the fortress. Look how far I've come since losing the sixth-year election for school tax collector to Erib Bustcastles!

Next, I have made myself a nurse. Everyone likes nurses, right?

Finally, I have instituted a new secret society. Here are the rules:

- 1. You don't talk about brew/fight club.
- 2. You don't talk about brew/fight club.
- 3. When someone says stop, or goes limp, the fight is over, but the brewing must never stop.
- 4. Only two dwarves to a fight. Or maybe not. But definitely any number of cows.
- 5. One fight at a time... just ain't happening. And we need more stills for more brewing.
- 6. They brew and fight without shirts or shoes. In memory of Battlefailed way. Unless they have shirts or shoes. I don't.
- 7. The fights go on as long as they have to. Duh.
- 8. If this is your first night at brew/fight club, you have to fight. Everyone has to brew, or there will be a lot more fights.

Did I mention we're out of alcohol? Every adult dwarf has joined brew/fight club. I'm going to stop talking about brew/fight club and throw a bed at someone

4th Granite, 520

```
`Lupusater' Fikodtimnär, Boss cancels Make wooden Bucket: Went insane.

Lupusater' Fikodtimnär, Boss has gone berserk!
```

Lupusater is upset that brew/fight club wasn't her idea. She has murdered her baby. Did I mention we were going to break Rule 4?

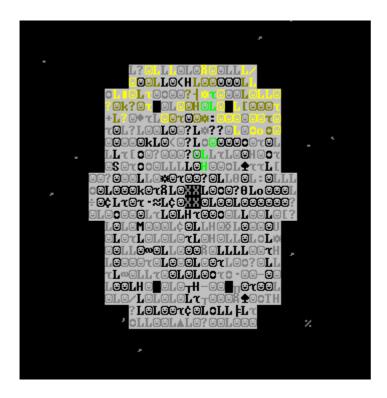
5th Granite, 520

```
Two Notable Kills
`SethCreiyd' Heavenearth the dwarf, d. 519
`Lupusater' Glazetaper the dwarf, d. 520
```

Kinda sad about the way that things have come to be. Desensitized to everything.

6th Granite, 520

I walked downstairs, and looked around. This is what I saw.



As I watched, one of the toddlers stumbled past me, his eyes opening impossibly wide. And I was frightened. He said, Frosty, Frosty, hold on tight. And down we went.

```
Andreus UII' Datankulet. Recurring Masochist
"'Andreus UII' Ironabbey"
Creator of Telingothör Thetust Linòn, &

Dabbling Armor User
Dabbling Thrower
Dabbling Fighter
Dabbling Archer
Dabbling Striker
Dabbling Striker
Dabbling Dodger
Novice Grower
Legendary Stone Crafter
Adequate Persuader
Competent Negotiator
```

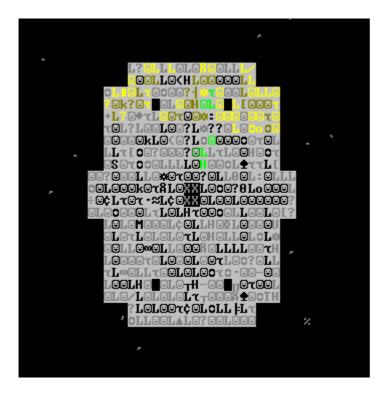
In the mountains, there you feel free.
I read, much of the night, and dream I go south in the winter.
(Away from here.)

9th Granite, 520

This is his seventh coming. He is frustrated by his body. It promises so much, and delivers so little. If we had farms, he tells me, he would do something for me.

"What are the hide roots that clutch, what branches grow out of this stony rubbish?" I tell him.

"Daughter of stone, " he tells me, "You cannot say, or guess, for you know only a heap of broken images, where no sun beats."



11th Granite, 520

```
Frosty' Nomalrag, Nurse cancels Clean: Went insane.
→ Frosty' Nomalrag, Nurse is stricken by melancholy!
```

I don't feel any different.

15th Granite, 520

Dariush became the nurse I could no longer be. She has a hospital now. The wounded lie about, waiting to be cared for. As for myself, I was neither living nor dead, and I knew nothing.

I asked her to bury the dead. We have a fortune in coffins. She told me to wait; there are not hands enough to bid good-bye to the dead.

At least the screaming is stopping.

21st Granite, 520

We are not alone. I am never alone. I hear them moving below.

```
99 (46)
                                                    Atu
An enormous eight-legged stegosaurid appears to be emaciated. Beware its webs!
                                                              composed
                                                                                                           Ιt
                                                                              of
                                                                                    clear
                                                                                                glass.
                                                    Vafe
           three-eyed lobster. It
Beware its deadly blood!
                                                                                         it squirms
                                                  has a
                                                             short
                                                                       trunk
                                                                                 and
                                                                                                          and
   huge
fidgets.
```

```
FPS: 100 (49) Kamca Pabozkashi

A gigantic feathered tortoise. It has a short trunk and it undulates rhythmically. Its cerulean feathers are long and broad. Beware its noxious secretions!
```

The stegosaurid would make a lovely room ornament. The other two might be fortress-enders. I hear I can walk without tracking blood now, but I choose not to try it.

_4th Slate, 520

Dariush has catalogued us, and told me who we are, and how we have been sentenced for our crimes:

- Derm: hospitalized (Beating, 51 days in prison)
- LordSlowpoke: working, happy he repeatedly stabbed Nat (Beating, 76 days in Prison)
- Dariush: working, happy as a clam about her new baby (beating, 226 days in Prison)
- Oglokoog: working, happy he murdered a horse (Beating, 526 days in prison)
- Nat: starving, needs hospitalized after "cheering up" LordSlowpoke (Beating, 526 days in prison)
- Frosty: insane and depressed (pleads insanity, suspended sentence)

16th Slate, 520

Master Andreus, famous conjurer, had a bad cold, nevertheless, is known to be the wisest wizard in Failcannon.

He tells me some migrants have arrived, despite the danger.

Do you know what he will do? He will bring back the dead, casting them into the bodies of the living.

Isn't this wrong? Too late. He's done it.

"Do you want Glacial returned?" he asks.

Do I?

I hope they build a ramp quickly to let the ghosts in before the skeletons slay them anew.

18th Slate, 520

How wonderful. The horses menacing the immigrants have skin. Everyone is inside the fortress. A child let them in.

I had not thought death would undo so few.

Welcome back, dragonshardz.

Welcome back, Felcis.

Welcome back, NightmareBros.

Welcome back, LucusCasius.

Welcome back-- no, Andreus, think of her crimes against us all!

Ah. Even the necromancer has a sense of humor.

I have given them their orders. It is time for the burial of the dead.

8th Felsite, 520

My tomb is complete. I hear the sound of ticking now.

9th Felsite, 520

With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine—

'Frosty' Nomalrag, Melancholy Mistress has died from thirst.

Cloth... I dream of cloth. Soft cloth enfolding me, crafted into...

into...

or am I rotting from within?

Glacial's Journal

1st Hematite, 520

The Chair he sat in, like a burnished throne, Glowed on the schist--

and in it sat a child of two, eyes glittering like jewels.

"Andreus," I said, trying out my strange voice, muffled by my strange beard, hiding my strange face.

"Glacial," the child answered. "Frosty did not wish me to bring you back--"

"But that is how it is done, here in Failcannon," I finished his sentence. "What day is it?"

"Fetus Head Smash Festival."

I think we are in rats' alley (Frosty whispers) Where the dead men lost their bones.

Welcome back, Glacial. Welcome back, Lupusater.

1st Hematite, 520

I found Frosty's journal, and Andreus shared his notes since her death, filling in the gap of a month. I have preserved Andreus's original writing; it seems that the other fortress-inmates are only letting him draw with crayons. "You could fall on it and hurt yourself!" they tell him when he asks for a pen.

That may be the only way he has yet to die here.

The Abbreviated Journal of Andreus VII, Crayola Edition

11th Felsite, 520

Elves arrive. Would mock them but almost out of red crayon.

19th Felsite, 520

Skeletal buzzards invade the fortress. Xellas takes care of six of them.

Then zombie buzzards invade the fortress. Felcis and Xellas deal with them.

26th Felsite 520

The Dwarven child 'mgrinshpon' Ablelmegid has organized a party at shale Statue.

cappstv's tradition is catching on. Reminded people: am toddler, not fetus.

Andreus feels that, for Failcannon, everything is remarkably peaceful.

...

I should have worried more.

3rd Hematite, 520

Frosty missed a forgotten beast in her original catalog. It's interrupting the festivities, but has not found a way into Failcannon proper. Fortunately, I don't think it can fly.

```
FPS: 100 (49)

A gigantic quadruped composed of green glass. It has a stubby tail and it has a bloated body. Beware its deadly spittle!
```

2nd Malachite, 520

Over the past month, I've taken to hunting skeletal groundhogs and zombie horses while the migrants raise a defensive wall and build new bridges. cappstv insists there's a bridge, but he also insists it was responsible for the deaths of most of the fortress's dwarves, so I have ordered a new bridge to be built. I'm only humoring him because I was already dead when he turned the fortress into an abattoir.

There are a set of microcline-kaolinite-cobaltite levers in the entry hall, near the depot. They raise a trio of one-dwarf-wide bridges from the hill down to the beach. North of them is a jet bridge, controlled by a jet lever north of the other three levers. It controls a third bridge that restricts access into an entry corridor.

When I gathered the other dwarves to explain my plan for the entry corridor, they were sceptical.

"Combining a cage with a mechanism?" someone scoffed. "What do you think that'll do?"

"Bah," another dwarf added. "Next you'll want to link ten lethal metal disks to a mechanism and call it a weapon trap! Who do you think you're fooling?"

Despite their resistance, I have gone forward with my plan. With NightmareBros' assistance, we have created something new in Failcannon. I call it a "cage trap."

5th Hematite, 520

Zathel, possessed, delivered this gem of the bonecrafter's art:

```
'Zathel' Bermesir, Bone Carver has created
Lithrushlolum, a groundhog bone shield!

Press Enter to close window
```

I've taken to carrying it.

8th Hematite, 520

Fresh drinking water has been created inside. There's a cobaltite pump that draws it from an aquifer-flooded room. It's manually operated, for reasons of not flooding the rest of the fortress.

12th Malachite, 520

The masons raising the new wall around the fortress reported a half-dozen undead horses on the eastern border of our territory today. We've dispatched several individual undead horses; this will be a good chance to prove the strength of our new military. I've ordered both squads -- marksdwarves and axedwarves -- into the field against them.

```
Ustuth Otunggusil, Recruit has been struck down.
Urvad Stukóningiz has become a Hammerdwarf.
Urvad Stukóningiz, Hammerdwarf has been struck down.
The fortress attracted no migrants this season.
'Xellas' itdùngoden, Medic has drowned.
'Grath' Avuzsom, Recruit has suffocated.
```

But at my back in a cold blast I hear

The rattle of the bones, and chuckle spread from ear to ear.

22nd Malachite, 520

"I tried a number of... different things," Andreus confessed as I opened my eyes in a new body. "Forbidden things. But each time the threads of fate converged, and you died again. As did the others."

What would it be like to die and live and die and live and live again? Could even the necromancer grow tired of it?

"What about the others?" I asked Andreus. "Did you bring them back?"

Andreus frowned. "I can't. Your niece -- Frosty -- is interfering somehow. She is standing in the gap."

I posed the obvious question, "And yet you brought me back."

Andreus glowered, scrunching up his little face. "I know. It seems to be your turn."

When she was two, Frosty had dimples.

23rd Malachite, 520

Three more undead horses joined the herd shortly after our forces engaged the first half-dozen. Individually, the horses had been easy prey previously, but this time, it was different. First, and not for the first time in recent dwarven history, our marksdwarves decided to hit the horses with their crossbows, rather than shoot bolts at them. Second, I underestimated the ability of the skeletal horses to knock dwarves down.

Particularly me.

It felt like days of the same thing: knocked down, I would be driven backwards, and though I would block with Lithrushlolum, my groundhog bone shield, I would neither have a chance to stand or counterattack before a skeletal horse would knock me down or drive me back again. In that body, I became a pretty good shield dwarf before I finally met my end.

I made a token effort to rebuild the military, but there are very few dwarves I can spare. The wall is not yet complete, and below, there are several breaches into the caverns that need to be sealed. Felcis, having missed the entire engagement while looking for socks, is now in charge of the military.

24th Malachite, 520

I've ordered work started on a magma forge complex. It will take some time to complete with the labor available, but we will need it to arm our next military, whomever they might be.

7th Galena, 520

```
The forgotten beast Oce Omsosuja has come! A gigantic three-eyed mayfly. It has an enormous shell and it squirms and fidgets. Beware its deadly spittle!

Press Enter to close window
```

This one is a flier. Also, a fly.

It's time to see how thoroughly I've had the caverns sealed.

10th Galena, 520

Well enough, it seems. Oce Omsosuja has taken to wandering the caverns purposelessly instead of coming to bring Failcannon to an end.

17th Galena, 520
A human caravan has-
An ambush! Skulking vermin!

Andreus rails, "Again! Again! Kobolds above, great flies beneath! A curse upon fate, that repeats the same story! Let there at least be a new doom, gods!"

I am too busy grabbing whatever weapons are at hand. The kobolds are inside the fortress.

```
Flalmin, Kobold Spearman
Pligidiflidis, Kobold Bowman
Sraylbis, Kobold Bowman
Jrogofoshronkin, Kobold Bowman
Srifithonkis, Kobold Bowman
Jatarin, Kobold Bowman
Jatarin, Kobold Bowman
Invader
Invader
```

18th Galena, 520

Nat, our mayor, has finally moved from the depot corner where he has lain, gravely injured, since LordSlowpoke stabbed him when Frosty was still alive. Rest in peace, Nat -- you were the most undemanding mayor I've ever known.

Dariush, congratulations on becoming mayor! The kobolds fulfilled your first (unofficial) mandate for a whole bunch of arrows, largely in your spleen.

In addition to Nat, the kobolds brought down a recruit.

21st Galena, 520

The kobolds drove off the humans, naturally. Annoyingly, they did so without bringing down a single pack animal.

It's time to seal the gates and lick our wounds. 25 dwarves remain; we cannot afford to lose any more dwarves working on the wall.

23rd Galena, 520

The kobolds injured a half-dozen dwarves. I have created a team of dwarf therapists focused on medical work, only to discover that all my therapists were among the wounded. Fine: everyone's on hospital duty.

Flagro was possessed just before the battle. He produced a dull reward.

```
RoldethFPS: 100 (48) ir, "Anguishwinters the Dull Reward", a horse leather
This is a horse leather quiver. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest
quality. It is encrusted with bituminous coal, studded with iron, rose gold
and lay pewter, decorated with horse leather and encircled with bands of
copper. This object is adorned with hanging rings of horse bone. On the item
is an image of a maple in bituminous coal.
```

2nd Timber, 520

Massive medical efforts are paying off. Dariush is out of the hospital and repairing her dehydrated state.

5th Timber, 520

And Oglokoog is out of the hospital. That leaves one therapist in the hospital, needing 4 splints.

In other news...

```
The forgotten beast Zolak Kutsmobesnust
Gangoxludosm has come! A huge hairy slug. It
has thin wings of stretched skin and it has a
bloated body. Its moss green hair is long and
shaggy. Beware its noxious secretions!

Press Enter to close window
```

For the love of Lur, future overseers, don't open the lower caverns!

8th Timber, 520

For the first time in my reign, I have an empty hospital.

Flagro and Felcis constitute the fortress military. I've sent them up onto the partial walls a few times now to take pot shots at roaming undead horses. Until more immigrants come, the surface beyond our walled beach is out of our reach.

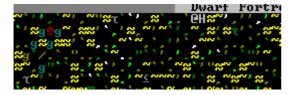
14th Timber, 520

Oglokoog has died from infection, after leaving the hospital in apparent good health. I've ordered the old hospital torn down and replaced.

Outside, I've heard there is a goblin ambush party. It's not my problem: I'm not letting anyone in or out, so they'll have to occupy themselves with skeletal groundhogs.

_19th Timber, 520

The dwarven caravan has arrived!



The outpost liaison chose a wiser route; I let him in. I'm not bothering to open the door again. We'll have no more caravans this year.

1st Moonstone, 520

The BrewFight Boss 'Tyler' Mebfikod has organized a party at microcline Statue.

I shouldn't be talking about brew/fight club, but Tyler, the head since Frosty died, decided to organize a party to celebrate everyone not being dead. She even invited those of us who **have** been dead. You should've seen Andreus and cappstv knock back the dwarven ale.

I'm glad we have farms again.

17th Moonstone, 520

There are no more goblins above: a skeleton horse herd trampled the three remaining ambushers.

19th Opal, 520

dragonshardz gave birth to a boy. I think she's my wife.

'dragonshardz' Igathasmel, Brewer has given birth to a boy.

Hooray, I'm a father. Didn't I start out a woman?

Andreus tells me I'll get over the confusion.

14th Obsidian, 520

```
This is a rope reed fiber face veil. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is decorated with rope reed fiber and groundhog bone. It is made from rope reed fiber cloth. This object is adorned with hanging rings of rope reed fiber and horse bone and menaces with spikes of rope reed fiber and green tourmaline.
```

Andreus, upon seeing the face veil, grew ecstatic. "This is it!" he yelled. "This is what I need!"

I pointed out that he wouldn't be able to wear it until he was a grown-up, and he headbutted me in the nuts. Ow.

I think he's working out the advantages of being sixteen inches tall.

28th Obsidian, 520

Inevitably, a new goblin ambush emerged on the last day before I hand over leadership of the fort. There is a bow squad parked in the northwest corner of our territory. I don't see that there's much to be done, other than to hope the skeletal horses get them.

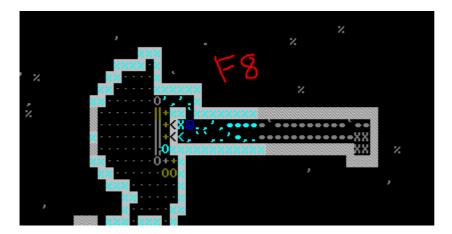
My time commanding Failcannon is at an end, and I leave the fort stable, but underpopulated. The hospital is empty, and there are no dwarves throwing tantrums. There are drinks and food; there are walls, doors, and bridges linked to levers.



The magma forges are operational, but there are not enough dwarves to run them efficiently.

One area I'm concerned about is the cavern breach I refer to as "F8". I noticed this late in my reign, and have partially replaced the up/down stairs with up stairs, preventing fliers from coming up them.

The project is not complete, though. As one of their first orders, I strongly recommend the next overseer finish it, before one of the flying forgotten beasts comes in.



Finally, on the beach level, I have built a tree farm and begun work on a device I refer to as "Failcannon II".

Fear death by water

I believe any overseer worth his pick will know what needs done there.



I sat upon the shore Fishing, with the arid plain behind me Shall I at least set my lands in order?

Meanwhile...

The streets of Graspedseduce were as empty as they'd ever be. At this hour of morning the only things moving were the guards and the rodents, the latter of which the former would use for conversation during the duller patrols. Two dwarves skulked about the alleyways, passing undetected through the shadows and dousing street lanterns as they went, until they found their destination. They knocked on a thick iron door with the provided knocker of a horseshoe.

"Who is it?" called a gruff voice. The shorter dwarf Bomrek could hear nothing of the inside proceedings.

Fikod, the taller one, answered. "Glittertomes," he said. The name was a recognized fake. One could never be too safe, as of late. He casually glanced over his shoulder. The alley was dark and bereft of life, with only a small amount of space between buildings. This was a ramshackle part of town, a place where disrepair was a way of life, since most of these particular houses had belonged to philosophers, legally forced into hiding some decades ago. It was known that Queen Led was still quite preoccupied with eradicating those lovers of wisdom left - like Bomrek and Fikod - who still walked the streets of Graspedseduce, concealing their love of wisdom behind closed doors.

Bomrek stood with his back to the wall, his cloak drawn up, alertly watching the alley's entrance for activity. "Urist isn't coming tonight," he said, somewhat somberly.

"Yeah, I know. Poor guy," Fikod said with his eyes closed. He shook his head. "Can't imagine what it's like."

"Who sent you, Glittertomes?" The steely words rode through the closed door.

"Nokzamungèg," Fikod said. The word carried the ideal with which the Earthen Sock was formed. After a few seconds, there came the clicking noise of unbolting locks. The heavy door creaked open. "Inside," whispered a nervous voice.

Fikod made a gesture telling Bomrek to go in first. He strode in with Fikod close behind. They entered into a room filled to the ceiling with weapons; the swords were proudly mounted on studs in the walls, the axes lay readily on tables, the spears were hidden, buried in the floor. Above the doorway sat several cages, waiting to be dropped. A chained dog sniffed at Fikod and wagged its tail happily.

The door closed behind them, and Bomrek met eyes with a harried looking dwarf, who stood by the door with an axe at his side. He fervently nodded as he recognized the visitors. "Good, you found the place," he said with visible relief. "Urist was discovered earlier today. The tavern won't be safe for years."

"We heard." Fikod rubbed his beard. "They're starting to make sweeping searches of every building in town. To stay ahead of them, we'll have to move every night. We'll need to dig a new town before long."

The meeting was already in progress. Bomrek and Fikod crossed the room to join.

"The Queen is not just a tyrant, she is a monster! One does not let a monster or its children live!" "She won't die of old age, just look at her. She should have died years ago."

"I hear she uses the blood of babies to preserve herself."

"We must all agree there is no other choice. The Queen and her heiress must die."

"They must die."

"They must."

Bomrek and Fikod looked at each other. They had already sworn the oath. To speak it now was simple.

"They must."

Muttering agreement passed from the mouths of all present. To his own chagrin, Bomrek found himself smiling at the thought.

"And how do you propose we manage to get to either of them? Do you expect the guards to just drop their weapons and let us have at their Queen?"

"I have no training, no rank. I want to kill the Queen myself. I want to feel my axe cut off her infernal head. My wife was killed during the Smashing... it was her baby..." the dwarf began to cry. "Damn the guards. They'll be red ribbons soon."

"We'll call on all dwarves in Dastot Cog to fly the banner of the Earthen Sock and we will take back our kingdom!"

"For the Earthen Sock!"
"For Dastot Cog!"

The Queen's hatred of philosophers was broadly held as related to the dissertation, published by one Rith Idrith (a post-Uristolean), which claimed that Queen Led suffered from "acute psychopathy, induced by a traumatic encounter with the infamous yeti Chilldrilled, who ate her cat in front of her when she was a little girl."

Lur's Tale

There was some sort of holiday celebration, it was a party. Lots of ale. Then a long trip. A retreat. And there was a strange wood, and a bridge that spanned one canopy to the other. It was mahogany, brick, and it led to the market... It was to the west, and there were pools, gardens, it was an inn... a shore, with the sickly colored green sky and rusty wooden walk and then, nothing.

When Lur awoke, it was probably some time after all this dreaming, because he recalled only the ghost of who and what he had seen. It had felt chillingly real, and the people there, he'd known them, but their identities escaped in the daylight.

He sat up and tried focusing on the shapes around him. Here was a finely decorated room, sitting on a bed with a thin glass of water next to him. A candle was still burning strong, though much of the wax had been eaten away. The sky was on the verge of blue, but it was early morning, and no sun yet threw its color to the world.

He was naked, and noticed his damp clothes hanging on the ledge of an open window. He remembered falling into a frozen river that had quite instantly thawed once he had walked halfway across. He couldn't escape. His limbs scrambled for some kind of traction against the current, to no effect. The water entered his lungs and burned fiercely. That was before he forgot where he was, when everything went dark.

He must have been rescued, but by what? Lur wasn't aware of anyone living in such a remote part of the wilderness, and travelers were rare and not often the sort to casually risk their life for a stranger's. He moved stiffly out of bed. A yellow-brown robe was draped over the edge of the bed, and he changed it to it slowly. He hadn't yet become accustomed to sleep as mortals know it, and the experience always left him feeling drained. He groggily rubbed at his eyes to remove the debris, and ambled over to the windowsill. There he beheld a stunning view of the river he had tried crossing, as well as the mountains and woods far beyond, wrapping around the base of the taller crags and peaks that led the woods into wetland far to the south. A flight of birds left their roost in the trees and took off into a pale orange sky.

"Engrossing view, isn't it?" said a low voice from behind. Lur twisted to the origin of the voice, and saw a blonde elf in a red tunic, holding a glass lantern high in the air. A bow was slung across his back, matched by a quiver of arrows strapped around his thigh.

"In a few hours, the sun will rise over the trees, and the reflection on the water will be grand beyond words." The elf breathed in, as if he could smell the sunlight.

Lur frowned. He should have known the elf's birthday, his family history, the reasons for his scars, his blood type; but for now, the former god knew not even the elf's name. His old nature was becoming nothing but a distant memory. He struggled for the pieces he was missing, tried to order his thoughts the way he used to know how to, but it was becoming as foreign to him as the very room he was in.

"Where am I?" he wondered aloud.

"You're at an abandoned inn I have adopted for my purpose," said the elf. "My name is Iwo. I found you in the river, where you were dying."

Lur made no effort to move his frown. "Well... Thanks," he said, rubbing the back of his neck. "That was rather decent of you. How did you find me?"

"You were bellowing quite loudly," said Iwo. "These ears do more than adorn my face, you mind. Your screams drew every hungry beast the forest has to offer. We are doubly lucky I found you when I did."

Lur nodded, wondering when his headache would go away. "I imagine you are hungry," said the elf, and he pointed with his free hand down the hall to his right. "I will prepare a dish of herbs for breakfast. Please come downstairs at your leisure."

Lur scratched his back as the elf departed. Donning a pair of slippers found under the bed, he thought of repaying the elf's kindness one day, when he was a god again, if that day would ever come. Lur largely ignored that last side of possibility, reasoning that the hope of regaining his godhood was all that kept him from immediately seeking the quickest and nearest brothel to spend his next forty years.

He came down the stairs after a few minutes, and passed the front door at the bottom, turning right and heading down a wide hall that was halfway open to a sitting room by the side. The inn could have seated fifty or so during its operation, but most of the room was occupied with cobwebs thick enough to suggest that the place had lain empty for centuries. The boarded windows allowed little light, but this wouldn't bother a dwarf much. Lur sat down to a few plates of leaves and berries set on the nearest table. A decanter of wine sat invitingly in the middle.

The wine was delectable and consumed with standard rapidity, but Lur wasn't hungry for the bitter-looking meal before him, and left the table in search of something redder and fleshier. Even elves were given to eating meat on occasion, and there was bound to be some nearby. He had just entered the kitchen when he saw Estun the Psycho Analyst laying stiffly across the floor, bound and gagged with cloth.

"Estun?" said Lur, his eyes widening. There was no reply.

"I thought you'd recognize our other guest. Please make yourself comfortable, but any sudden movements will take you to a similar end." Lur turned around slowly, and saw that his host had indeed drawn a heavy wooden bow and was aiming at him with a precise and unwavering grip.

The ex-God of Jealousy held his now-mortal breath. In all the eons of godhood, in all the forms he had been worshiped in, he had never once considered that he, well, might die. Even after becoming mortal, he had brushed the thought aside each and every time it had been evoked, but now, faced with peril, he was aware that he was quite mortal, and compared to the arrow pointing at his head, very small.

Lur knew all about death -- he knew that normally, after the initial horrors of painful body-shedding, that the overall effect of being dead wasn't so unpleasant -- but he had too much at stake in this life to lose it. This, and that the reigning state of things couldn't recognize normal if kicked in the face by it, and Lur did not want his next incarnation to be a violent-tempered fire-breathing vomit blob.

"This human has identified you. We have tracked you for days. I have orders to bring the dwarf known as Lur back alive. I would rather be paid for this task, but I will sell your bones, if I must to make due."

"I'm gonna sit," said Lur with a grimace.

"I'm glad that you will," Iwo said with a warm smile. He turned his aim and fired at the front door of the inn, some distance down the hall. The arrowhead splintered into the wood and stayed there. The elf nodded with approval. "Please eat while I prepare the animals. We will be walking."

Iwo left the inn and audibly locked the door behind him. Lur cast about for any windows that were not boarded up. There were none. He considered prayer. Then he checked on Estun to find him breathing, but out cold. Estun's head bobbed like a listless doll in defiance of Lur's shaking.

Wretched heartbeat, Lur thought. Quiet down! He picked up a table, regarded Estun, thought about hitting him with it, and moved over to the window. He knew the elf would hear him, but if he was quick enough, it wouldn't matter. It was a hefty 'if.'

Bracing himself, Lur charged at the window, table-first. The broken pane of the window shattered further as the table triumphantly sallied through the boards and fell out the window into the tall reeds outside. With an exclamation of victory, Lur grabbed hold of a broken table leg and dove through to the outside.

"What are you doing?" said Iwo's voice somewhere to Lur's right. The elf was looking at the broken window with a puzzled expression. "I meant what I said about the bones."

Standing up, with a yell and all his might, Lur threw his makeshift weapon at Iwo's head. The elf drew his bow and batted the spinning table leg out of the air.

Lur charged. Running away was pointless, the elf could probably outrun him, and an arrow certainly would. He hoped to close the distance before the elf had a chance to fire. A hand-to-hand fight was his chance. As he drew close enough to throw a punch, the elf stepped deftly to the side and cracked Lur in his head with the bow.

He picked himself up, but not before he felt the dart sting his neck. All was blurry. Before long, he was unconscious once more, and he dreamt of gallows and virgins.

TURN 7 - OGLOKOOG

Filthy Xenos

Journal of 'Oglia' Vathsithid, temporary overseer of fortress Failcannon

1st Granite 521

I awoke this morning ("morning" being a rather meaningless word, of course, considering we are underground) only to find out that I have been chosen (by who?) to lead this fortress for the entire next year. I don't even know how I know this. I just do. So, I took a short break from my usual schedule of weaving thread into cloth and started pretending to "oversee" things around the fortress. I don't know what I'm actually supposed to do, so I just walked around the fortress trying to look all important.

Here's what I noticed:

- everyone seems to be pretty happy, which is good
- everyone is actually only about twenty-five dwarves... I thought there was more of us.
- we have a pretty extensive magma forge complex, but not enough dwarfpower to actually use its full potential
- there is a hole into the caverns which looks like a forgotten beast might fit through it

Of these things, I only know how to fix the last one. I ordered a floor built over the hole (the mason said that an upwards stair would've been sufficient, but I'm not so sure. Floors seem much sturdier and more forgotten beast-proof to me) and the task was completed quite swiftly.

We also seem to have enough food and drink to last us quite a while, but I don't know whether we have enough cooks and brewers to expand the stocks should we deplete them.

How the hell should I know what day it is?

There are goblins outside. In fact, there have been goblins outside for quite a while, but only now does it matter.

Migrants have arrived. I wanted to just open the door for them to get inside, but the two military dwarves we have sternly denied any possibility of that happening (they are soldiers by name only anyway... they pretend to train sometimes, but I think they actually just sit around in the barracks when nobody is looking. They aren't properly armored or in any way combat-ready, as far as I can tell.). I really wish we had a proper military.

Well anyway, we tried shouting at the new arrivals to run away, but by the time they heard us, it was too late - the goblins noticed them. It was a massacre. Some of them, however managed to get close to the door, so I convinced the "soldiers" to open it just for a moment. They did, but in the ensuing chaos hellbored, our manager, wandered outside and before I could do anything, the goblins got too close and the soldiers forced me to close the door again. There was nothing we could do.

The five dwarves that managed to get inside (out of the total of twelve that arrived) were in quite bad shape, but our doctors seem to be taking care of them... acceptably. It seems that at least some of them might survive. I talked to them and none of them possess any particularly useful skills (which, I would imagine, is the reason they were desperate enough to travel to this deathtrap of a fortress), but that doesn't matter. We need any dwarves that we can get.

I really have no idea what day it is. Honestly. Not like it matters anyway.

An elven caravan arrived. Since the last entry, the goblins have left, but another two squads arrived to take their place. It doesn't seem like they will leave us alone anytime soon. The elves got slaughtered and we could only watch. I really, *really* wish we had a real army instead of these two good-for-nothings.

There are, however, good news! Four of the five wounded dwarves are alive and well and have already started working. The last one is still in bed, but it seems like the doctors might be able to fix him up as well.

The last dwarf is finally out of the hospital. I have to say that our doctors are really pretty competent. Inside the fortress, nothing is out of the ordinary - there are still some barrel-related issues, but I'm sure I can sort that out.

Outside, however... today, a goblin invasion, a small force of kobold bowmen and a human caravan collided just west of our wall. Unlike the stupid elves, the humans actually brought some weapons and people to use them so they fought back and even killed some of the filthy Xenos beasts, but ultimately, they were all brought down and killed. Afterwards, both the goblins and the kobolds left so I sent Tyler out to finish the wall that one of my predecessors has started. I hope he manages to finish it before another threat arises; luckily, I had the foresight to amass a quantity of stone beside the wall so he doesn't have to walk a lot to get building materials. We really need the wall - as the kobolds were rushing to greet the humans, they fired a few arrows down the cliff and somehow managed to hit a child, who is now resting in the hospital.

Today a Hill Titan appeared within sight of the fortress walls. It looks like a massive, hairy iguana and has an austere look about it (don't look at me! I don't know what "austere" means either, the engraver told me that). I immediately ordered the destruction of the ramps going up to the wall because even though the titan surely can't break down walls, doors could prove to be... less than optimal as far as titan-proofing goes. Now that it can't get in, I can sleep well again.

Actually, scratch that last part. This morning I woke up in cold sweat. I saw the titan *swimming* in the Blueness of Malodors, approaching the unprotected shore, entering the fortress and slaughtering every single one of us. Just as its poisonous spine was about to pierce my heart, I awoke.

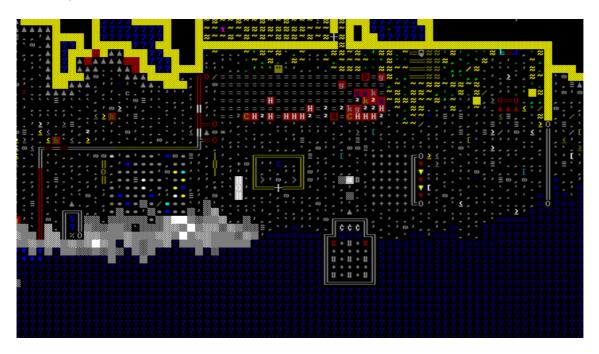
I holted out of my room (which is quite pice, though in no way as grandiose as some of the previous

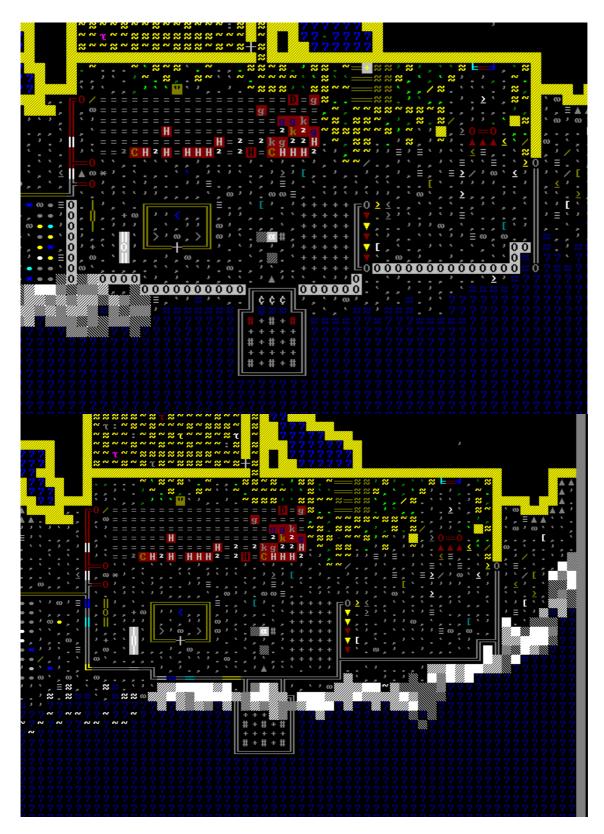
I bolted out of my room (which is quite nice, though in no way as grandiose as some of the previous overseers' ones) and found one of the soldiers looking at the sea.

"Where is the titan?" I asked.

"It just jumped into the sea. I didn't know hill titans could swim," replied the soldier. *Oh god.*

"Tell everyone to stop whatever they're doing and start building a wall from there to that other end." "Yes, lady."





The wall is finished. The titan simply can't get in now and neither can anything else.

Another two caravans arrived and we could do nothing but watch them get slaughtered by the titan. Then, however, the goblins returned. Half the fortress gathered on the wall to watch as the titan noticed them and attacked.

Well, as much as I loathe the greenskins, I have to say they gave the titan a good ass-kicking. It did kill a few of them before it fell, though.

A possessed dwarf then went mad. I barely even noticed that he was possessed and assumed we had enough of everything to satisfy his needs. Turns out that wasn't the case and one of the dwarves preemptively installed a door in the entrance to the workshop he was scribbling away in. I wanted them to remove the door at first, but his subsequent mad babbling convinced me that it's probably best to just leave him be. His mind is broken.

A few days before the end of winter, another dwarf has withdrawn from society. I don't really know what he's up to, but I certainly hope we have enough materials for the completion of his (no doubt magnificient) work.

TURN 8 – LORDSLOWPOKE

Have a dwarfy day

Journal of LordSlowpoke, Worker

Journal start; 1.01.522, in order with protocol FBS-41

After awakening from the mood inducted by standard nondescriptionary measures, I have been introduced to the VBS project.

Nobody told me what would happen. Maybe it's better off for me. Avuz himself knows what I am able to do now.

First things first. I need to decrypt the orders given. Hopefully they'll contain a clue...

Meanwhile...

```
Maintenance terminal. Insert beard signature to continue.
Scanning...

Welcome to the Independence Network, Lord Slowpoke. [24.03.22/15:44
Urist Standard]
>connect

Communications dish unavailable. [24.03.22/15:51 Urist Standard]
>logout

Logging out...
Have a dwarven day.

Maintenance terminal. Insert beard signature to continue.
```

The machine grinds into inactivity, it's stone gears clicking, yet unheard due to a horde of dwarves working above.

```
Later...
```

. . .

```
>connect
```

```
Communications dish detected. Attempting to connect... Connected.
```

>load board/failcannon

```
/failcannon
```

>srtfile rep1

File created.

>load board/main/textedit board/failcannon/rep1

[STX] - Report of Lord Slowpoke, fortress overseer, 20.06.522

I apologize for the delay in reports, but the vil lage didn't have a communications dish available.

Herein, I confirm that I have established control of the facility, I am able to report, and shall do

Case one: Clearing the aboveground

As it was known, the plain area above the settleme nt of Battlefailed was almost literally covered in goblins, kobolds, undead animals and corpses. My plan for their undoing is described in the attachment as a separate status report.

Before we had a chance to use it, the goblins kil led the kobolds, and did the same to the "skelks", as the locals call them. I shall refer to them in that way from now.

Some progress on the magma cannon was made, but there's a problem with the general ocean-caverns water movement, so I'll leave it for the skilled technicians you'll send for us next year. Currently, six are dead, nobody important, but the death toll is going right up due to failures of the last overseers.

P.S. I'll kill the guy who sent me a machine wit h a 50 character limit. - [ETX]

>send report/standard

>logout

Logging out...
Have a dwarven day.

The goings of the gods

A thousand miles in an arcane direction away from the center of everything, shone something like an endless light illuminating every moment to unfold over any given reality.

Something like a cloak of darkness stretched around the cosmos. The light continued to flow, but blocked, it turned back to itself.

The holes in something like a great protective Seal widened, and in long lines, something like a horde

of insurmountable evils hurried forth.

From the Sanctum of Worlds, Ura watched with great interest. If she had lips, she would have licked them. Millennial planning had not been for naught.

The roads to the afterlife choked off. So many died, but with nowhere to go, the dead took to wandering their world, sleeping in coffins to dream without end. Others would take on new forms inspired by their madness and return to their world as twisted forgotten monsters who knew only to kill.

She would reward Led for this. She would die painlessly. As always, Ura smiled.

The Age of Death had begun.

Andreus' Tale

Despite the strain of recent events, Andreus was allowing himself a shred of optimism. The body of the child he had possessed displayed an uncanny talent for magic. From her undersized lips issued ancient languages that framed irresponsibly complex rituals, and never had such power come to him so easily. While the reanimation of Failcannon's dead had been no trivial task, the single instance took only months of preperation, rather than the normal decade.

The act had been a suitable demonstration of magic's practicality. Glacial had come to cease his "technology is superior in ways" arguments. The two of them sat there on the rocky floor of a chamber that glowed in the fiery light of a brazier.

The sky, bereft of stars, lay incomprehensibly open like a blotted book. Weariness fell on Andreus' borrowed young bones. "I must cut this lesson short, Glacial," he said, looking to his left and right. "I need to confer with someone." He bowed his head shortly. "I trust you have work as well."

"More than enough," Glacial conceded, and left the room.

The brazier on the ground stirred, spun, and launched into the air above. An ochre flame came to life, betrothed with a lit septagram folding into itself at the top, and at the head of all the fire wormed a snake around the star. The image lasted some moments before Andreus reached out and closed his fist. The flames trembled slightly and faded from view, and in their place stood a manshaped fly composed of what looked like mucous. A star shone in the ground around him. The enchantments would prevent the creature from lying or leaving.

Andreus was somewhat excited. He seldom had the power to properly command a demon. It would go better than the last time he tried, he hoped.

He cleared his throat. "I am Andreus, Magister of the..."

"Not now!" said the demon.

Andreus raised an eyebrow. Inexperienced though he was, this seemed abnormal.

"I haven't got time for this. Things are happening!"

"...what?"

The demon reached a hairy arm past the boundaries of the star and drew back from the resulting burn.

"Not so fast," said Andreus. "I need answers, and it seems that you have them."

The demon looked around and scowled. "Then make it quick, mortal."

"Well, what things are happening? What's going on here? Why are stars disappearing?"

"You don't know? Have you not heard the laughter in the dark? Can you not feel them even now?"

"Feel what?" Andreus stretched out his mind. He felt nothing but dwarves, though he did stay clear of the chattering thoughts of the beasts below the caverns. "The monsters underground?"

"I suppose they are beyond the ken of mortal magic. How can I describe to you the nothing that is? You exist, Sorcerer; you have substance, a form, a being. They have none of these things, nor feeling. Theirs is the complete absence of anything."

"What are they?"

"The enemy of all who are." The demon spat the word as if it were a vile poison issuing from his lips. "That includes you and I, Sorcerer. For ages and ages, the gods have held them stasis, but no longer. The Seal has been broken. They are everywhere."

"But what are they?"

The demon regarded Andreus. "What are you afraid of, mortal?"

"Answer my question, please."

"I have."

A pause. Andreus searched for the next question.

"What happened to the Gods?"

"From Hell we cannot see, but they would not have allowed this to happen by choice. Something has stayed their hand. It is most troubling."

"You sound almost sincere."

"Think not that I would pass the chance to taste the blood of gods. We remember our banishment. I mourn no pain of theirs. But the Old One: it shall torment us forever. And we will never die. With the Seal destroyed, it is a matter of time before it comes." The demon sighed. "So if it's really all the same, I'd like to get along back to Hell while I can still enjoy it."

"Not yet. The Old One?"

"The oldest. Older than oldness."

"A god?"

"Not as any you know."

Andreus stared at the embers in the brazier.

"What caused the Seal to break down in the first place?"

The demon folded its arms and wings. "This I don't know. You'd have to ask the gods themselves."

"They appear indisposed at the moment."

"Too bad." The demon squirmed. "Can I go now?"

"Not yet. I need to know how to repair the Seal, find the gods, and expel the monsters."

A few seconds went by. The demon grunted. "Start hoping for a miracle," it said.

Lord Slowpoke's Report

This one, I will write on paper form. The machine is broken hopelessly.

This is I, Lord Slowpoke, at 22 Sandstone. Pretty much my last report as the overseer.

While the Protocol granted me many powers, which I am still unable to fully describe... the occult have been coming. Ghostkind, to be specific. Dreams which I can't understand at all, which forced me to double my booze intake.

Nevertheless, the grandiose plan of reclaiming the aboveground is far from complete. We do not simply have the resources to pump magma to the essential systems, and water proved to be ineffective - the installation has been dismantled and forgotten, yet the invading goblins and kobolds have been dispatched once more.

Today, I am finished with the mechanisms, the plans, the eternal schemes. I have earned my title. I have earned everything I needed in life, until now. It is time to don the finest armor and weapons I can find, and become not just Lord Slowpoke.

I am become **The Great**.

The Savior of Dwarfkind is just too overused.

-LordSlowpoke

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: Nat's turn, that is right below this note, didn't have any in-character writing, so it's more a report than anything else.]

TURN 9 - NAT

Barony

Nat's Report

Dragged as many dwarf corpses inside and buried them as I could. Unfortunately some more got killed later, including the dwarf caravan, the diplomat was fine though, hopefully this doesn't cause

too many problems in future.

The fortress was full of full stockpiles and cluttered workshops, and I tried to do something about it. Made lots of bins, so now there's a million hauling jobs that need done. Just don't have enough dwarfpower to get it done in a year.

Tried to clear up some of the rocks - there's heaps and heaps and heaps of rocks everywhere. Same deal, not enough haulers.

Gave LordSlowpoke some minions, started training and equipping them. This has already paid off. Started making bronze to outfit the minions. I don't think we have flux for steel but if we do and I just didn't see it, my bad. I'm still finding new things in the fortress I didn't notice all year.

We are now a barony, with a baroness. Didn't quite finish her rooms, they're near the tombs. Have Fun. Did I mention she's one of LordSlowpoke's minions?

We have way too much food, especially plants. Should probably shut down the farms but I forgot about it.

Booze is low and we need more barrels because of all the food. Whoops.

Population:

Start of turn: 12 good dwarves, 10 children End of turn: 29 good dwarves, 13 children

Forgotten beasts: 3 new ones, I think we have about 9 or 10 now. Hard to count because they're often hiding.

Moods: 2 successful, 1 failed.

Named Dwarf Deaths: Oglia (insane, but will be dead soon), Felcis.

Total Dwarf Deaths: other than those 2... I think 2 other dwarves? Some of the dwarf traders got killed too, about 3 or 4 of them, if you count those.



TURN 10 - SETH CREIYD

Ocean of slime and beasts forgotten

Journal of Sethrist Cosmopaddles, 12 Granite

All is quiet, for the moment. The Plains of Ooze have been empty of the undead these last few days. We had no trouble reaching the gate of Failcannon.

```
Conquerors of Earth 1. 'Sethrist' Krdmdn, Usrpr
```

He is here. I can feel it, no matter what body he's hiding in this time. After all these years, here he is at last. He's not going to escape this time.

```
Raw adamantine! Praise the miners!
```

I've learned a great deal since our last meeting. If I can manage to surprise him, it will be easy. But first I had to establish a legal means to the authority necessary to carry out my task. This fortress lacked a Captain of the Guard, until now. The baroness had no choice but to acknowledge my case. Any proper barony requires proper law enforcement.

There is one thing I can thank the sorcerer for. From him I learned a valuable lesson.

```
The captain of the guard slashes The mayor in the lower body with his thronze short swordt and the severed part sails off in an arc!

'Dariush' Berlulâr, Cook has been struck down.
```

Take what you need.

```
LordSlowpoke' Asobkurel Kisatnoglesh No Job (Chained)

'LordSlowpoke' Asobkurel Kisatnoglesh Anriz has been e tragedy recently. He personal palace recently to have punishment delaye mired a fine tastefully a fine Bed lately. He to have punishment delaye mired a fine tastefully a fine Bed lately. He to have punishment delaye mired a fine tastefully a fine Bed lately. He to have punishment delaye mired a fine tastefully a friend lately. He admir slaughter lately. He to have punishment delaye mired a fine tastefully a fine Bed lately. He admir slaughter lately. He was be recently. He is depressed about being confined.
```

Things are going to change around here.

```
a barony
mayor
captain of the guard
militia commander
manager
chief medical dwarf
broker
arsenal dwarf
bookkeeper

Mebzuth Nîlesamost, baroness
Sethrist' Kordamiden, Usurper REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE]
'Sethrist' Kordamiden, Usurper REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE]
'LordSlowpoke' Asobkurel Kisat[REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE]
'Flagro' Izegkadôl, Bookworm [REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE]
'Sweet Pod' Oltarultèr, chief [REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE]
'dragonshardz' Mebzuthsat, ars REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE]
'dragonshardz' Mebzuthsat, ars REQUIRE][DEMAND][MANDATE]
```

As dangerous as it was, those occasions when it was profitable were so much so that Elven merchants had braved the journey to Failcannon year after year, risking life and limb in the hopes of a lucrative haul.

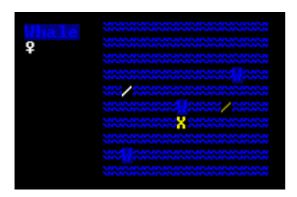
The danger was never understated to those who dared such a journey, and it therefore came with little surprise but moderate disappointment for the traders when the dwarves coming out to meet them suddenly raised their weapons and attacked.

```
The Speardwarf stabs The Elf Merchant in the lower body with his +iron spear+, tearing the muscle and tearing the guts through the ({rope reed fiber cloak})!

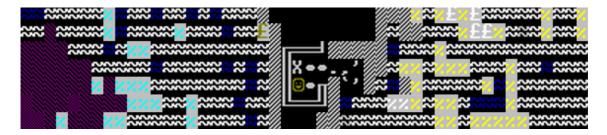
The Wrestler slashes The Elf Merchant in the lower body with her (-bronze short sword-) and the severed part sails off in an arc!
```

The caravan did not survive, but other elves would return the next year. They always did.

In the shallows south of Failcannon, a pod of whales swam about their lives in perfect obliviousness to the carnage of the lands above. For them, the Blueness of Malodors was a cozy place with warm currents and plenty of food. That the water smelled of cat piss never bothered them too much.



The Blueness of Malodors is truly not so bad compared to the sea of filth below.



Where once sat a pure aquifer beneath the Plains of Ooze now lies an ocean of poison, spawning pool of a legion of abominations howling in agony and rage untempered by reason as they putrefy in the mire.

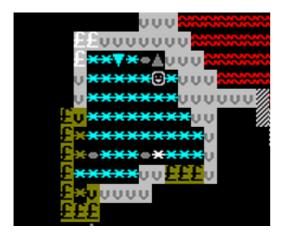
Yet deeper still, there are cries of a different kind - jubilation.

raw adamantine [111]

Zathel, leader of the local Miner's Guild, was killed today during a scuffle with one of the soldiers. Xenos was reprimanded. We can't be killing off too many valuable personnel.



Specifically, skilled miners. The truemetal is vitally important to my work. The natural magnetism of the stone here makes detection of psychic signatures too difficult for me to pinpoint the sorcerer. In recognition of the advantage this has given me as well, it must be my advantage alone, and these adamantine caverns are the key.



They'll be quarters fit for royalty, but before royalty gets here, I intend to make full use of them. The military and the gentry can use the ore as they see fit, it is of little interest to me.

The previous mayor was given a funeral befitting a noble of his station. I later exhumed the corpse to extract all the blood, which was cycled into the bloodstream of a soldier who I am now referring to as 'Dariush II.' I hope to determine that blood is a working conduit of personality.

```
The Forgotten Beast Reksas has come! An enormous blob composed of flame. It has three long, straight tails and it squirms and fidgets.
```

That's odd. I could have sworn I heard something.

Anyway, the discovery of adamantine has lent legitimacy to my bid for power. The countess is impressed, and although

```
granite Door destroyed by Reksas, Forgotten Beast.
'Derm' Oburthob, Leatherworker cancels Construct Building: Interrupted by Forgotten Beast.
The dwarves suspended the construction of Cage Trap.
```

PROBLEM!

```
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Leatherworker!
The Forgotten Beast attacks The Leatherworker but He jumps away!
The Leatherworker is caught in a cloud of flames!
```

Derm. I hardly knew him...

```
The Leatherworker scratches The Forgotten Beast in the right tail, breaking away a piece of the tissue!

The Leatherworker punches The Forgotten Beast in the center tail with his left hand and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The Leatherworker scratches The Forgotten Beast in the body, breaking away a piece of the tissue!

The Leatherworker kicks The Forgotten Beast in the body with his right foot, breaking away the rest of the tissue!

The Leatherworker is caught in a cloud of forgotten beast flames!
```

...before today. I must keep an eye on him.

```
His upper body is melted. His right lower arm is melted. He is unbelievably strong, very slow to tire, agile, rarely sick, tough and quick to heal.
```

To explain: Derm, a leatherworker of little renown, had been attacked by an enormous blob of flame in a hallway near the second cavern. This incident is reflective of a massive lapse in security that will take valuable time to deal with. I'm considering the appointment of a new Captain of the Guard, but it must be someone loyal, someone trustworthy.

Back to where I was. The countess was impressed, and though I have only been at my post the better part of a month, it was easy to convince her to let me –

Door destroyed by Vafe, Forgotten Beast.

What in the name of -



Another monster sighting, this time it's a vicious white lobster. The soldiers are arming now, and as Captain of the Guard, it falls on me to lead them.

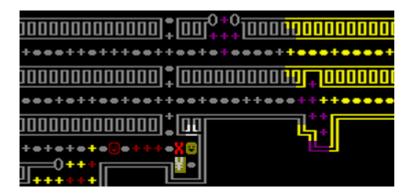
Gods damn it all.



The lobster scrambled down the stairs and happened upon a hapless mason who was finishing up a security bridge in the area. The fellow was ripped apart in seconds. Seeing her friend torn to pieces, a nearby swordsdwarf cursed the beast and charged it, only to be killed just as fast.

The Forgotten Beast strikes The Swordsdwarf in the head with its (pig tail fiber cloak), bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing apart the brain! 'EmeraldWind' Arzescerol, Swordsdwarf has been struck down.

Down in the old quarry, Derm had been placing food in a stockpile when the beast skittered into the hall, followed by myself and half a dozen armed dwarves. He was a new addition to the Fortress Guard, and aside from his encounter with the blob of flame, this was his first experience with combat.

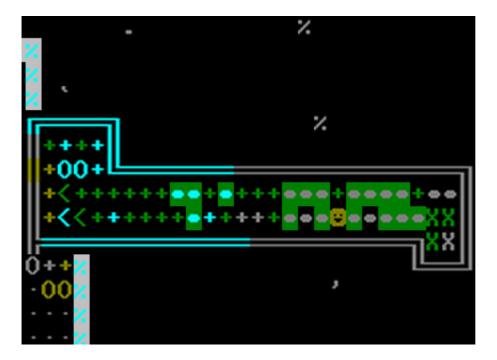


Derm steeled himself and approached, spear at the ready. He waited for the beast to spot him before springing the attack.

```
punches The Forgotten Beast in the head
bruising the muscle and bruising the brain!
The Kills of 'Derm' Oburthob
Reksas the forgotten beast, d. 524
Vafe Spikesgripped the forgotten beast, d. 524
```

A good punch to the head, and the lobster was dead. At this rate I may need to give Derm a house.

As I was saying: I had no trouble convincing the Baroness to allow me to place furnishings in the mined vein of adamantine. My plan draws ever closer to completion.



By the gods, these dwarves are disgusting. On my way up from the smithy I passed through a hallway doused ceiling-to-floor in vomit. Someone's going in chains for this. What kind of jerk just gets sick and leaves it for someone else to...

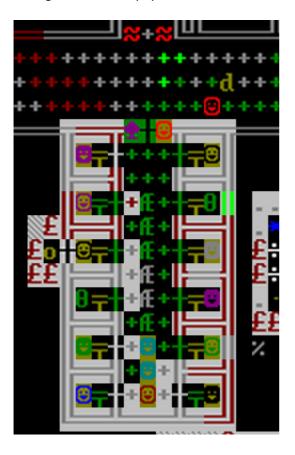
```
Usurper vomits.
The
   Usurper retches.
The
    Usurper retches.
    Usurper vomits.
The
The
   Usurper retches.
The
    Usurper retches.
   Usurper vomits.
The
The
   Usurper retches.
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   Usurper retches.
The
   Usurper vomits.
The
    Usurper vomits.
The
   Usurper retches.
The
    Usurper retches.
   Usurper vomits.
The
The
   Usurper retches.
    Usurper retches.
The
The
    Usurper retches.
The
    Usurper vomits.
    Usurper retches.
The
```

The Kills of 'Urist Imiknorris' Vathezonol Three Kills



I am throwing up every five minutes. It's been like this for a week, so that's how long it's been since I slept. My guts emptied themselves long ago, now all that comes up is bile.

This all started when I got that lobster's goo all over me. If Derm and I survive this ordeal, I'm going to harm him. I'm certain that the monster's blood is toxic, and responsible for the stomach ailment vexing a sixth of the populace.



Six dwarves have been stationed in the hospital area. Their only task is to clean away blood, vomit, and any other residue that may be contaminated. They may leave only to eat.

The implications of this disturb me. Fortress records indicate there are many strange similar entities in the caverns around us. Was a creature such as this lobster responsible for the plague that ruined Battlefailed? Was such a creature responsible for its mysterious failure?



I made sure that there's no way for THAT to get into the fort.

```
Interrupted by Forgotten Beast. Oce Omsosuja

A gigantic three-eyed mayfly. It has an enormous shell and it squirms and fidgets.
Beware its deadly spittle!
```

Foul kinsman of Stuzang, the infernal mayfly tore up the stairwell, bent on killing everything in sight. Fortunately, a young soldier named Urist had other plans.

```
The Beastslayer slashes The Forgotten Beast in the left second leg with his adamantine short sword, fracturing the chitin!

A ligament has been torn and a tendon has been torn!
```

At last, we've completed the necessary security bridges, so that means no more unnanounced guests. With any luck, we can now proceed to –

```
the Forgotten Beast Riqui is fighting!
the Therapist 'Cheese' Likothetan is fighting!
The Forgotten Beast shakes The Therapist around by the right foot and the severed part sails off in an arc!
```

WHAAT!?



Urist came across this monstrosity stinging Cheese in the torso repeatedly while the poor dwarf lay helpless in the monster's claws. The scorpion continued its attack on Cheese despite Urist's assault, until finally:

```
The Kills of 'Urist Imiknorris' Vathezonol

Two Kills

Oce the Umbral Urn the forgotten beast, d. 524

Riqui the forgotten beast, d. 524
```

NOW then, can we actually get back to work?

```
'dragonshardz' Mebzuthsat, arsenal dwarf
Interrupted by Forgotten Beast.
```

Of course not!

```
An enormous hairy skink. It has a broad shell and it appears to be emaciated. Its green-yellow hair is patchy. Beware its webs!

Its lower body is bruised. Its left front foot is bruised. Its right front foot is rotten. Its left rear foot is rotten. Its right rear foot is rotten. Its lower spine is fractured. Its right rear leg is gushing Espir Riddledterrors's forgotten beast blood.
```

This fortress will be the death of me.



The creature headed straight for the smithy. Urist was there, dressing in new equipment, and was the first to engage the monster.



It seems that it was wise to provide the soldiers with truemetal. The results have been spectacular. And now, at long last, after an entire day of fighting wretched abominations from the deep, the halls have grown quiet. The danger has passed.

Scouts have unearthed an ancient structure near the stairwell. The passage leads to a great underground sea of pearly white 'stuff.' I need to find out what it does.

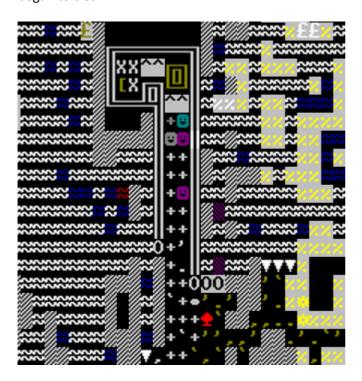
The stench was overwhelming, but I ordered the scouts to press on. They unearthed something else.



I am beginning to understand what drives a dwarf to madness.



As the wretched thing fell to the ground with one final roar, the stench began to fade. the mist began to clear.



I hope to find out who built this place, and for what purpose. At this time, I'm simply glad to have stopped vomitting. When the military is fully equipped, we will send an expedition into the caverns to determine exactly what secrets the Plains of Ooze are keeping.

Some migrants have arrived.

Excellent.

Magma Smelter destroyed by Uívo. Forgotten Beast.

You know what? I'm going to bed. Wake me up if everyone dies.

```
An enormous feathered spider. It has three long, spiral horns and it appears to be emaciated. Beware its poisonous bite!

Its right fourth foot is rotten. Its left third foot is rotten. Its right third foot is rotten. Its left second foot is rotten. Its right second foot is rotten. Its left first foot is rotten. Its right first foot is rotten. Its left fourth foot is rotten.
```

I woke up this morning. I guess that means we killed the fucker that broke my smelter.



I am left with two options. I can wall off this bridge to an unexplored lake of evil-tempered toxins whence these monsters seem to be coming from, or, I can assemble a team of dwarves and charge across into the cavern to uncover whatever is hiding there.

It wasn't really a choice at all. Soon as the Conquerors of Earth were prepared, we stormed into the cave. I had to lead the expedition myself. If something of value is found, I must be there to claim it!

Before venturing too far off the bridge, we stumbled across our first obstacle -- or rather, it stumbled across us.

Otik's Breath... it was horrible. The worst thing I've ever seen or smelt. Words fail to contain the tears it brought to my eyes through my nostrils. But now it is slain, and we are cleaning up and reforming before heading on further into the caves, and Derm is a step closer to that house I've been thinking about.

```
The Forgotten Beast slams into an obstacle!
The Forgotten Beast's right upper arm takes the full force of the impact and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Forgotten Beast's left upper leg takes the full force of the impact and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Forgotten Beast's lower body takes the full force of the impact and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Forgotten Beast's head takes the full force of the impact and the severed part sails off in an arc!
```

LOOK OUT





(The rest of the page is covered in forgotten vomit.)

* * *

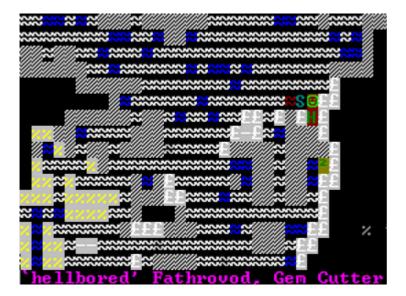
The first thing Sethrist noticed about the Ocean of Slime was that it was very warm. He then noticed he was drowning. It was by virtue of his uncanny intuition and not his enfeebled eyesight that he noticed the ponderous glass-spider quickly approaching through what he would generously refer to as 'the water.'

```
An enormous eight-legged stegosaurid composed of clear glass. It appears to be emaciated. Beware its webs!
```

Sethrist did not know how to swim, but he was quite skilled at getting away from things that could obviously kill him.



As he slowly paddled away to safety, the glass being closed in on hellbored. The flesh was quickly parted from his bones in the corrosive liquid around him.



When the monster emerged, hungry for the blood of more dwarves, the fortress guards were there at the shoreline to greet it. Urist, who had fallen in the sea, ignored the layer of slime coating him as he battled the nightmarish spider, much easier to spot now outside of the water.

```
The Forgotten Beast misses The Beastslayer!
The Beastslayer slashes The Forgotten Beast in the upper body with his adamantine short sword, fracturing it!
The Beastmaster hacks The Forgotten Beast in the left first foot with his (adamantine battle axe) and the severed part sails off in an arc! The Beastslayer stabs The Forgotten Beast in the right fourth foot with his adamantine short sword, chipping it!
The Beastslayer slashes The Forgotten Beast in the right third leg with his adamantine short sword and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Beastmaster hacks The Forgotten Beast in the lower body with his (adamantine battle axe) and the severed part sails off in an arc!
```

The fight was finished before Sethrist finally managed to pull himself out of the muck.



'I feel fine,' he thought. And he did. 'But all the same,' he thought, 'we'd better get checked out, so we know what we're dealing with.' And so the soldiers who had fallen in the poison sea formed up for a final inspection before getting ordered to the hospital for evaluation.

```
The Beastmaster stands up.
The Beastmaster vomits.
```

On their own power, they failed to make it past the bridge.



Sethrist's Journal, excerpts

Evaluated — Mebzuth Nîlesamost Diagnosed with beast sickness

The doctor is at a loss to treat the ailment brought on our the dip in the underground lake. Our bodies turn more lumpy and squamous every hour. I can't feel anything anymore, and even moving takes a great effort. I fear that in a few months' time, we will all look an awful lot like those undead horses outside.

Still, it mustn't interfere with my work. There's little over half a year left before any legal basis for my being overseer is ended, and I need to finish my Chamber before that time has come. I'm going back to work, the doctor can't stop me. At the very least, there will be no more unwanted interruptions from cavern-dwelling monsters. I expect we flushed them out during last week's expedition.

My sister was only a child. She had her whole life ahead of her, until Andreus stole her body. But soon the Chamber will be completed, and soon I will be avenged. Soon, Andreus, you'll pay for your crimes.

Interrupted by Forgotten Beast.

Oh gods what now

An enormous sauropod with lidless eyes. Beware its deadly blood!

The Beastslayer slashes The Forgotten Beast in the head with his adamantine short sword and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The forgotten beast Usmdas appeared in the smithy and was killed by Derm within seconds. Construction has begun on his house.

A human caravan from Gil Thinir has arrived.

The human traders have arrived. They came into our fort and immediately started doing business with LordSlowpoke, who was released from prison just a few days ago. He's adapted to his new role in the fortress, but every time he looks at me I can feel him willing me to die. Time will tell if he is allowed to live or not.

But I digress. The humans say their law-giver is on the way to meet with me, and that we should prepare for her arrival. Something about they way they said that just strikes me as odd, but I can't put my finger on what.

```
Quazi, law-giver
"Quazi"
Law-giver, $?

A gigantic panther twisted into humanoid form with external ribs. It squirms and fidgets. Its black hair is unkempt. Beware its noxious secretions!

She is average in size.
```

AAAAHHHMY GODS WHAT THE DEVIL IS THAT

panther devil boiling extract

There's NO WAY that thing is getting in

```
a The CKill Quazi, law-giver
b The CKill Quazi, law-giver
c The BKill Quazi, law-giver
d The TKill Quazi, law-giver
```

The humans watched sadly as the armed dwarves passed by the trade depot to the surface of Failcannon to meet with the infernal diplomat. The panther demon grinned and raised its arms wide in a peaceable gesture, but all friendly pretenses were cast aside when the dwarves drew close enough to attack.

```
The Usurper hacks The law-giver in the upper body with his -adamantine battle axe-, but the attack is deflected by The law-giver's ({large rope reed fiber cloak})!
```

The durability of the demon surprised them. Again and again their blows rained down with little effect as the demon batted them around, breaking ankles and elbows as it walked closer and closer to Failcannon.

```
The law-giver charges at The Speardwarf!
The law-giver attacks The Speardwarf but She jumps away!
The law-giver slams into an obstacle!
The Speardwarf stabs The law-giver in the left paw from the side with her adamantine spear, tearing the muscle through the (<large rope reed fiber sandal>)!
The law-giver falls over.
```

Letting its guard down for only a moment, the demon got a lucky spear driven into her side by Xenos the speardwarf. The battle was all but over from there.

```
The Speardwarf stabs The law-giver in the head with his adamantine spear, tearing the muscle, chipping the skull and tearing the brain through the ({large rope reed fiber hood})!
```

Xenos was received as a hero by the humans, who cheered at being freed from generations of suffering and tyranny. He's taking it in stride, but I suspect he's just happy to have killed something awesome.

I ordered the corpse brought back to the stockpile. If there's one thing we shouldn't waste, it's a demon's corpse. I was relieved to learn that whatever poison the demon was exuding seems to be relatively harmless if it's harmful at all.

```
The Milker looks numb!
"Tekkud Mansionpaddle"
Quazi's corpse, Hauled
```

We didn't trade much with the humans, as all we truly needed of them were logs of wood and barrels of surface booze. I have no doubt that they'll bring a great deal for us next year, in light of our service to their nation. Let us hope they never forgot their emancipators.

I wish I could feel good about all this, but it's frankly difficult to feel good about anything when your body looks as though it's been eaten by rats. Perhaps when I find Andreus I can convince him to teach me the Body Switching ritual before I kill him for ever.

Autumn has come.

It's Autumn. I have six months. Where have the last six gone?

Andreus' Journal

```
'ArcaneSaint' Rushruliteb, Peasant has succumbed to infection.
Ineth Tabarfikod, Ghostly Mason has risen and is haunting the fortress!
```

I miss the stars. There used to be so many stars in the sky.

```
Slepon Sleponrubsit Simo Smemak

A great quadruped composed of salt. It has large mandibles and it squirms and fidgets.
```

Why are we still here?

I mean, I know why I'm still here. But it's a mystery that anyone else is. Life may have been hard in Graspedseduce, but there you could at walk through the streets without worrying about some gigantic glass rabbit or an ice giant stomping you down, or falling into a vat of sickness put there by gods-know-what so that your skins comes to resemble the bark of a tree.

```
in an arc!
left rear leg with his
  steel crossbow-) and
                         the
                             severed part sails
                             Forgotten Beast
The Hammerdwarf bashes
                                              in the
 -steel crossbow-) and
                        the
                             severed part sails off
                                                      in an arc!
                         The
 he Hammerdwarf bashes
                             Forgotten Beast
                                                      lower body with his
                                                      in an arc
                  -) and
                             severed
                                     part sails
```

Incidentally, it's my sincere wish that any new passages these dwarves dig into the caverns are made only large enough for dwarves to pass through. Yes, another beast was spotted today, but this one was felled with such ease that I wonder if the more dangerous ones have already been killed. I know complacency is dangerous, however. The monster known as Stuzang is still thought to be in these parts, and it would be both foolish and arrogant to think we are above defeat. Such a notion is useful for military morale but useless in strategic planning.

Some migrants have arrived.

More refugees from Dastot Cog today, putting our population at 71. They actually think this is a better place than wherever they came. They'll learn.

Ekaolinite figurine of Led Shakeoars This is an exceptional kaolinite figurine of Led Shakeoars. The item is an exceptionally designed image of Led Shakeoars the human and dwarves in kaolinite by 'Andreus VII' Datankulet. Led Shakeoars is surrounded by the dwarves. The artwork relates to the ascension of the human Led Shakeoars to the position of queen of The Sword of Boots in 471.

I wonder if the elder council had any idea what would happen by making Led Queen. I wonder if Led knew herself.

Meanwhile...

A frowning Mezbuth lifted a dagger from her patient's face. "All done," she said, setting her blade down on a nearby table.

7th Sandstone. 524: Rotten tissue excised from mouth

"No getting out of bed for a while. I'll need to do your feet pretty soon."

His right foot is rotten. His left foot is rotten.

The baroness sighed. She'd seen much in her years as a doctor, but this was a twelve year old, already in danger of losing his life or his legs, slowly and painfully. It made her weary. Life had seemed much nicer when LordSlowpoke was mayor. Here she was, baroness of the fort, cutting strings of dead flesh from children barely old enough to work, and there didn't seem to be anything else for her to do. What could she? That bastard Sethrist had gathered too much personal power. The military would obey him, not her. The dwarves feared the military, not her.

Trying not to seethe, the baroness turned back toward her patient. The child seemed unnaturally calm as he gingerly prodded the incisions with a finger and nodded. "Splendid work, baroness. My thanks."

"Try not to eat anything for a few hours."

a stack of 197 forgotten beast meat

"I think I'll manage," said the child. "Baroness, if I may. What do you think of our new mayor?"

"Haven't thought much of him," she half-lied. "He doesn't say much when he's in here."

"I'm concerned," the child whispered. "I think the fort is heading in the wrong direction. I think..." he looked around and leaned forward. "I think this fort would be better off in other hands, Baroness." There was a stillness in the room. A few of the mayor's loyal soldiers slept in rooms all around them, and he would come in for daily reports. The child might have just sealed his fate.

"Make sure to vote, then," the baroness said. "The election is coming." She got up to leave the room, and added in her own whisper, "Be careful who you say this to."

"I will," said the child. The baroness left. The child examined his rotting feet.

I'm going to miss this body, Andreus thought.

Sethrist's Journal, excerpts

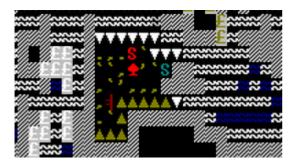


That tears it. I hear them every bloody night screaming their heads off. Today we finish these creatures off for good, or I'm throwing myself in the slime pool.

```
An enormous shrew with lidless eyes. It has a pair of fan-like antennae and it appears to be emaciated. Its rust hair is long and straight. Beware its poisonous vapors!

Its right rear paw is rotten. Its right rear paw is completely swollen
```

We found two of them rutting about in the caverns not far from the mystery bridge. This will be their last day alive.



There they are. We attack now.





Our first assault left the creatures tattered and scurrying back to the filth that spawned them. Alas, in our excitement we drew too close to the edge of that vile pit.

```
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Third Hand!
The Forgotten Beast misses The Third Hand!
The Forgotten Beast collides with The Third Hand!
The Third Hand is knocked over and tumbles backward!
The arsenal dwarf stabs The Forgotten Beast in the body from behind with his (adamantine spear), tearing the muscle and tearing the brain!
The (adamantine spear) has lodged firmly in the wound!
```

Lucus and dragonshardz got another kill each for the scorecards, but the winged beast knocked Lucus into the slime as it fell.



He's off to see the baroness. Between he and Gor, she should be busy for a while.

```
Fever Unconscious

forgotten beast extract covering (right foot)
forgotten beast extract covering (left foot)
forgotten beast extract covering (right eye)
forgotten beast extract covering (right ear)
forgotten beast extract covering (left ear)
forgotten beast extract covering (nose)
forgotten beast extract covering (throat)

Vision lost
```

The critters bled to death in the pool, but Gor, ah, Gor. Hit in the face by the venom of the demon slug. He's blind now. I will be checking in on the baroness shortly to see how our soldiers are doing. As for the baroness' state of being, I could care less. I intend to take her position if she dies of poisoning before I do. We'll be fine as long as she keeps the soldiers alive until then.

```
Announcement Date: 26th Sandstone, 524

Mebzuth Nîlesamost, baroness is throwing a tantrum!

Mebzuth Nîlesamost, baroness cancels Surgery: Throwing tantrum.

The baroness bashes The Engraver in the head with her (=«+bismuth bronze war hammer+»=), bruising the muscle and shattering the skull through the (giant cave spider silk hood)!

The baroness bashes The Engraver in the head with her (=«+bismuth bronze war hammer+»=), bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing the brain!

The (=«+bismuth bronze war hammer+»=) has lodged firmly in the wound!

"mrbobbyg' Tenshedducim, Engraver has been struck down.

Mebzuth Nîlesamost, baroness has calmed down.
```

We are under siege by an evasive enemy. It has no body to destroy, no land to invade.

'Flagro' Izegkadôl, Bookworm has succumbed to infection.

Half of the population is sick with the beast sickness. Without rest or reprieve it threatens every moment of our lives. Pools of venom collect on the floors near the well, forcing me to micromanage their construction and deconstruction and force these disgusting little morons to clean the mess. The baroness works day and night to contain the illness, and appears to be losing her mind. mrbobbyg died on the operating table last night, while Mezbuth was 'attempting to induce sedation' with a war hammer. The shape of mrbobbyg's head suggests she was trying very hard.

```
'Will Aluein' Astbauast, Dwaruen Child has died from thirst.
The arsenal dwarf 'dragonshardz' Mebzuthsat has organized a party at groundhog Cage (pine).
```

The hospital is currently under a full quarantine. The infected who are still walking are now assigned there permanently, tasked only with keeping the floors and water supply as clean as possible. I expect them to live long enough to fulfill their duties. They've managed to eliminate or contain the raw puddles of extract, but those already very sick are probably living only to die.

Oglokoog approached me last night demanding we seal off the caverns, but I just can't think of a good enough reason to do so.



I understand the soldiers' concerns, but I'm not exactly reckless. All it takes is the pull of a lever to raise the bridges and cut us off from danger, but I still expect there's something hidden in these caves, and I'm not yet done searching. Oglokoog was granted exclusive permission to pull the lever at the first sign of trouble.

Besides, if the caverns are sealed off, Neotemplar won't be able to scout them for us. She's a recent arrival who's started hunting the creatures of the caves to add some exotic meat to our hoard. Already she's bagged a few crundles, which made a phenomenal stew.



She wasn't understating the word "exotic." I doubt I'll partake in her latest catch, it's shaped like something I once had a nightmare about.



Curiously, she chased it all the way up to the burial hall from the caves. I'll ask someone else how it tastes. She gets bolder every day and I suspect she'll soon return from a hunt with something even more repugnant.

```
A creature that crawls along the cavern ceiling with four long arms. Its body is shaped as the head of a man with a mouth full of shark teeth. It waits for its prey to pass below.
```

Everything else has been delightful.

```
The Fish Cleaner Melbil Dodókèrith from Dastot Cog has arrived.

A caravan from Dastot Cog has arrived.
```

The supply caravan from Dastot Cog was spotted a few minutes ago. The outpost liaison will surely wonder what the hell is going on, and I've got to come up with an explanation. Here's hoping an

adamantine trade depot can make up for the mass pestilence we have going on.

The militia is patrolling and the local skorses are keeping their heads down for a change, so the workers were sent outside to gather clothing and armor from the dozens of corpses lain across the plains. The more garbage we feed to these cretinous traders, the better.

```
Mebzuth Nîlesamost, Hammerdwarf has been shot and killed.
An ambush! Curse them!
```

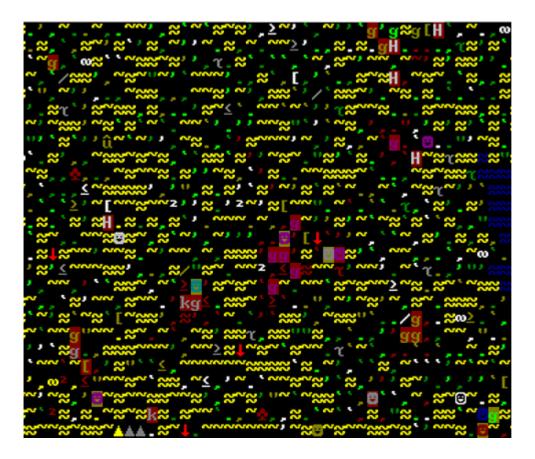
Alarm! Goblins without!

```
Snatcher! Protect the children!
An ambush! Curse them!
The flying ((*silver bolt*)) strikes The Recruit in the head, tearing the muscle, fracturing the skull and tearing the brain through the (large rat leather hood)!
A tendon in the skull has been torn!
The Recruit has been knocked unconscious!
'Oglokoog' Udistfikod, Recruit has been shot and killed.
```

Mezbuth and Oglokoog were shot dead at the very start.



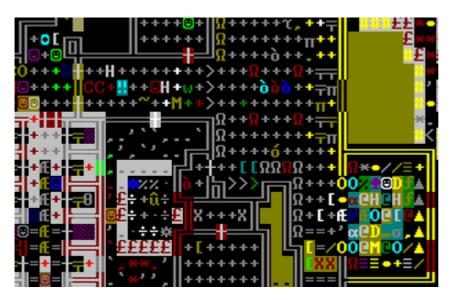
Every soldier in the fort ran to the fore screaming and brandishing pure adamantine. The first two squads of greenskins fled in terror, but two more emerged from the trees to the east and fired their crossbows.



Another group flanked us from the west as we advanced. It was a grim day.

An artery has been opened by the attack! A tendon in the skull has been torn! The Goblin Elite Crossbowman has been knocked unconscious!

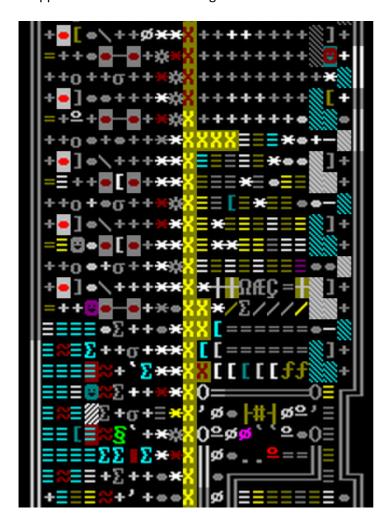
When we slew the leader, the rest of them scattered into the wilderness. We won the day, but there are many injuries and the hospital is already filled, so we've started building another one. Trading continues at the Depot. With the baroness dead, I must be the one to meet with the liaison regarding matters of migration and commerce. Not to mention we've lost our best doctor.



Thank goodness the hospital and wells are clean. The liaison is still inspecting the dining room, so I'll head down to the smithy to finish that order of iron spikes I've been trying to –

Magma Forge toppled by Zuglar, Forgotten Beast.

I suppose we can close that bridge now.



This one was an enormous grouse. I've lost count of how many creatures we battled this year, but this one stands out in my mind. It's tail feathers spiked out of its back like daggers even sharper than its terrible beak.

The Macedwarf slams into an obstacle and blows apart!

Tekkud was casually tossed into a wall where he exploded in gore. With a roar, Derm charged down the beast while Elt kept the abominable bird off-balance.

```
The Beastslayer stabs The Forgotten Beast in the left wing with his adamantine short sword, chipping the bone!
A tendon has been torn!
The Forgotten Beast slams into the Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast is caught in a pool of magma!
The Wrestler is caught in a pool of magma!
```

Elt was rather off-balance herself. The two of them fell into the magma pit with a horrible plop. Derm ran forward. There was no way to save Elt, but the Beastslayer made sure his comrade would die knowing the bird had been dealt with.

```
The Beastslayer slashes The Forgotten Beast in the lower body with his adamantine short sword and the severed part sails off in an arc! The Beastslayer stands up.
```

I wonder what she thought as she sat there in a tunnel of fire, slowly burning to death. It can't have been pleasant.

```
'Elt' Dodóktishis has been happy lately.

She gave somebody water lately.

Her head is melted.
```

```
({steel battle axe})
  ({iron high boot})
  ({-bismuth bronze shield-})
  {iron high boot}
  {iron right gauntlet}
  ({bismuth bronze left gauntlet
  {adamantine helm}
  {adamantine mail shirt}
  granite Cavern Floor
  Magma [7/7]
'Elt' Dodóktishis has bled to death.
```

The Conquerors of Earth are recruiting.

Meanwhile...

"And this is my office," said Sethrist to Melbil the Outpost Liaison as they neared the end of the official's tour. I'd like to add a window to the magma sea, if I can just figure out how.

The liaison had maintained a cool expression for most of the visit, but this room seemed to surprise her. "You built an office in the adamantine vein?"



Sethrist smiled and offered the liaison a seat. "These are quarters fit for royalty. Should the Queen decide to visit, they'll be hers for the stay, of course."

Uucar Kûbukônam, Soap Maker has starved to death.

Melbil nodded slowly as she sat down, staring at the smooth floor. It seemed to glitter in the dark with a pale blue light both peaceful and menacing.

"May I offer you a drink?" Sethrist moved toward the cupboard, but the liaison lifted a hand.

"No, thank you. I must tell you, mayor, I don't think the Queen will be coming here anytime soon."

'Cheese' Likothetan, Maimed Therapist has starved to death.

Sethrist's smile faded. "Why do you say that? Our wealth is tremendous, our warriors implacable. Whatever Led wants out of us, I imagine she's getting it."

'Ledi' Zonrabed, Wrestler has succumbed to infection.

"Mayor, this place is uninhabitable. You have more vomit in the halls than stone. On the way in here I passed a child crawling around on the ground because his legs no longer work. Did I understand you correctly when you said you had thirty dwarves locked in the hospital?"

"We are managing the disease. I have every confidence in our doctors' abilities."

"Look at you! You look as though a dragon digested you!"

"Save your cheek. It was an easily avoidable accident."

"Then why did you not avoid it?"

```
'Aik' Cuborzulban, Miner has succumbed to infection. Stodir Kelvunom, Blacksmith has died from thirst. 'LAAT' Avuzònul. Mechanic has died from thirst. 'Grov' Tunthak, Bone Carver is throwing a tantrum!
```

Sethrist slammed a fist on the table, and shook it as he realized the gesture hurt more than it impressed. "The situation is under control," he grumbled. "Now, if we can just discuss our trade agreement. I'm sure there's *something* here that's caught your eye." He swept his hand dramatically. "There's no need to trouble the Queen with such trivialities. I give you every assurance, we are fine."

```
'Grov' Tunthak, Bone Carver has died from thirst.
'Sweet Pod' Oltarultèr, Peasant has died from thirst.
'Gor' Eraltitthal, Engineer has died from thirst.
'Twobeard' Likottulon, Dyer has died from thirst.
'Canalan' èrithlisid, Bone Carver has died from thirst.
'nonobots' Adilnåzom, Siege Operator has starved to death.
```

Melbil looked again at the sparkling floor. A large passage of pure adamantine wound down out of sight. He pointed towards it and asked, "How deep does that run?"

'Sprout' Mishosrith, Swordsdwarf has succumbed to infection.

Sprout... she's dead. My wife is dead. How will I raise my son without her?

My... my son?

'Gilgameshclone' Ustuthlolum, Dwarven Child has succumbed to infection.

My son is dead?!

'Sethrist' Kordamiden, Usurper is throwing a tantrum!

The goings of the gods

Thoth was watching Failcannon carefully. If the world fell to ruin now from Sethrist's incompetence, all hope of maintaining existence would be lost. The gods would need to involve themselves as they swore they never would.

It meant breaking the Rules, But Ura had already broken them, and so would Thoth, to keep them around. Warping time and space, he focused on the very moment Sethrist became mayor of Failcannon.



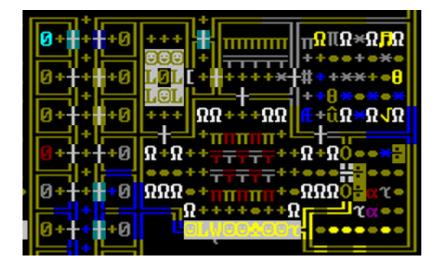
In a mysterious explosion that no one would ever fully understand or explain, Sethrist was killed and history irrevocably altered. A certain sorcerer who'd been a thorn in the gods' collective side was also caught in the blast.



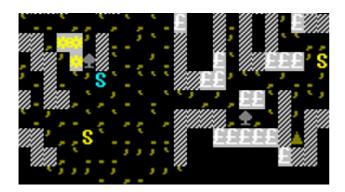
Failcannon never fell to the prideful whims of the tyrant mayor. The adamantine was never discovered, the caverns never uncovered. The dwarves were not visited by a devilish diplomat, nor did they do battle with the beasts from the underground.



Under Mezbuth's rule, they lived peaceful lives devoted to craft and making Failcannon a great place to live. A dining room with solid gold furnishings became the new meeting hall of the fort.



But still, Mezbuth was unhinged from the start. Xenos was forced to kill her when she went beserk in the training barracks. She wounded Pisano in the struggle, but not badly.



Below, the beasts slumbered still. More of them came. But they never attacked.

```
'Glacial' Vathezonol, Engraver has created Oshurrabed, a bituminous coal figurine of dwarves!

Oshurrabed, "Circledfreckle", a bituminous coal figurine of dwarves

This is a bituminous coal figurine of dwarves. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality.

The item is a masterfully designed image of dwarves in bituminous coal by Erib Vathezonol. The dwarves are laboring. The artwork relates to the foundation of Failcannon by The Enchanted Labor of Treaties of The Sword of Boots in the early spring of 516.

It is encrusted with magnetite. This object menaces with spikes of bituminous coal.
```

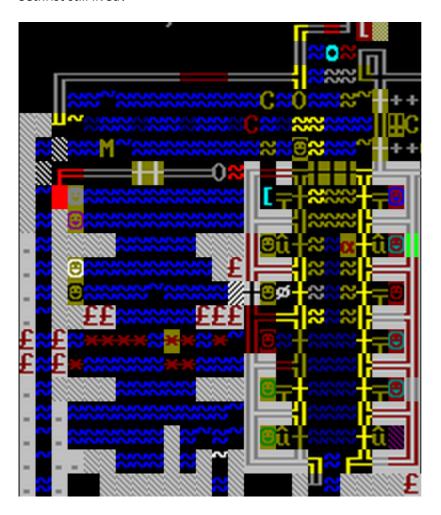
LordSlowpoke would die of thirst in prison, which led the new mayor Derm to place a booze stockpile in the jail. Unfortunately, Derm's reign was also shortlived when he failed to get the mysterious leather he'd been waiting for; none of the other leather would do.

```
`Derm' Oburthob, mayor's mandate has ended.
'Derm' Oburthob, Leatherworker cancels Strange Mood: Went insane.
'Derm' Oburthob, Leatherworker is stricken by melancholy!
```

Aik would be elected mayor the next day. The dwarves would live unaware of how close they all came to the end of everything.

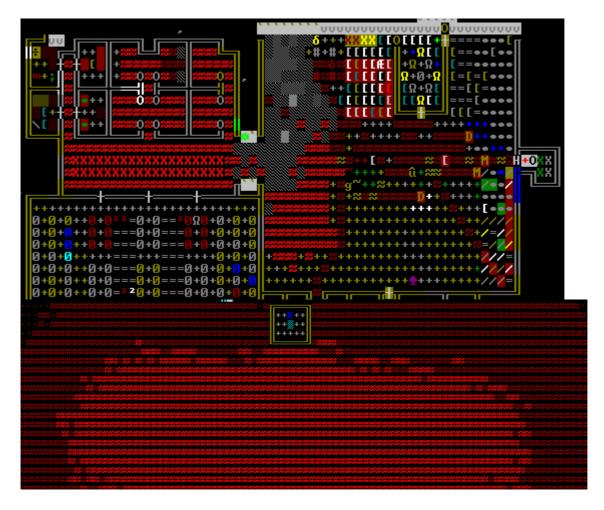


But what would have happened? What would become of the Failcannon in the other timeline where Sethrist still lived?









No one would ever know.

TURN 11 - ROBOCORN

Blessed are the cheesemakers

Diary of Robocorn Groovekeys "Cheese Maker"

8th of Sandstone.

I'm pretty sure that Såkzul was drunk when he got me this thing. Såkzul is *always* drunk but maybe he was drunker than usual when he thought I'd want some special little book to write all my special little secrets in I'm guessing it was a joke at my expense. We'll see what I get him for his birthday, maybe a poker to use at his "job".

15th of Sandstone.

So this is what's been making my bed so lumpy for the last week. I'd wondered where I left this thing. I'll have to thank Såkzul for my backache. Not that I need to do any heavy lifting with my job the official clerical registry lists me as a "Cheese maker" I can't begin to fathom why, I've never made a bit of cheese in my entire life. I think the decades long cheese scarcity in Failcannon may be somewhat related to this. In as long as I've been here I've never met another cheese maker in all of Failcannon, and I've been spending a lot of time in the dining hall. I like to joke that maybe some other cheese maker is running my shifts while I mess around at the bar and all my buddies get pissed off at me for never doing any work, except for Såkzul, Såkzul can relate.

20th of Sandstone

Såkzul came out of "work" early to drink with me in the dining hall. We got some dirty looks from a brewer as we emptied the last of the keg. Head him muttering something about leeches. Can't stand the things myself, just like those damned purring maggots, the things creep me the heck out. Maybe that's the "irony" (as Såkzul says) of being a cheese maker who hates the source of Dwarven Cheese. I don't think it's funny at all I think it's gross, Såkzul can shove his irony where the sun don't shine.

23rd of Sandstone

Some little runts had the gall to interrupt my drink by calling me a useless old cheese head. Little brats are lucky that I'd already sat down or I'd have shown 'em my wrestling skills, though I have been getting a bit rusty over the years. I'm glad Kigok has shown me the mercy never to grant me children (A wife would be nice though Kigok, any day now.) It's not only little scoundrels that give me a hard time for being a cheesedwarf the brewers the soldiers and even Såkzul give me a hard time. It's not like it was my choice to begin with to be a cheesemaker and it's not my fault there's no cheese (haven't seen a milker in years though the cows trot their muck through the whole damn fort) And what does Såkzul have to brag about? he's a friggin' Wood Burner (Kigok forgive my language) who can't roll over a log in a fireplace? It takes great heaping loads of skill (presumably) to make cheese that'll make dwarven mouths water all over their beards and stand in line for hours to get more while the stacks of salted demon ganglia grow cold and forgotten. They should be lucky to have me, the next time some snot nosed punk saunters up to me and asks in his throat crackly voice through his short tangled beard

"Eh what do yooou do, you old fart"

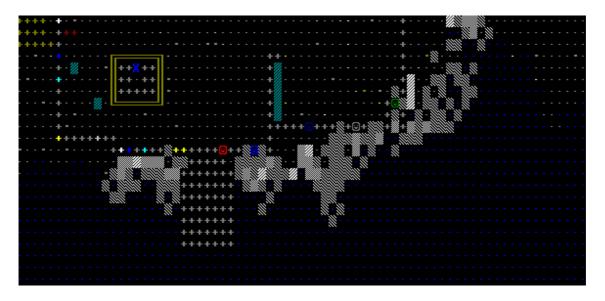
I can say

"I'm a cheese maker goddammit"

and go and pretend to do something somewhere.

Yeah that would show 'em.

28th of Sandstone



I heard some crazy immigrants walked across the outer wall of the fort to get in because they were too impatient to wait for the doors to open. I gotta say if you're impatient to get to Failcannon then there's something wrong with where you were, I asked one of 'em where she was (buxom young

beauty named Kikrost) from and she told me all about how she liked bucklers and sardonyx and banshees an some feller named Lur Thiefwitch and how they left because of something called Feta Smash Day. Even foreign cheese makers get their own days, I bet I could make a fine cheese if I had a few goats around, I just don't have any goat's is all. The babe wouldn't even tell me her surname after she found out I was a cheesemaker (I guess you like sardonics too Kigok):(

1st of Timber

Kigok, you must be having some fun with me but I've gotta pray for you to stop. I ran into some old vagrant bag the other day, some crazy old bag who thinks she's the eighth incarnation of some wizard who hides in ore and chose to be in Failcannon for some reason. well she bumps into me and makes me spill my fifth beer of the day on myself Instead of apologizing like she should she calls *ME* a "lazy oaf" with some snotty air of condescencion like she's not some lunatic broad who hauls stone all day. I tell here that

"I'm a goddamn cheesemaker!"

like I wrote about before and I swear that she was completely taken aback for a a half a minute looking for some kind of witty report before she whined about

"where's all the cheese?..bleh"

and

"I'm a magister of the fifth circle..bluh"

and

"don't they usually draft **your** kind into counter-dragon sumo squads?...bluh...bluh...bleh" I swear that Såkzul actually laughed at that last one he doesn't feel my plight that nobody respects the cheesemaker. That guy can go dance with shadow banshees and shove his sardonyx up where the sun don't shine. One of these days I'm gonna teach these ingrates that they need a cheesemaker in Failcannon.

8th of Timber

'Derm' Oburthob, Leatherworker has died from thirst.

Today is a sorrowful day for me. One of my friends Derm died today of thirst today in the hallway just outside his bed from thirst. It reminds me how close death is to us all. Derm was young, he had a life ahead of him. I'd been drinking the days away with not a care in the world. I hadn't even realized he hadn't been working and was actually dehydrating. I wonder how many friends of mine died without me realizing it. Have I still not made anything of myself?

'Robocorn' Edtûledëm has been ecstatic lately.

Naw, he would have wanted me to feel good.

I'm sure he's living it up with Kigok and her bountiful love. (Now if you'd share that, Kigok, it would be nice.)

9th of Timber.

Things are looking up for me the other day, the Mayor, Aik. Came up to me in the dining hall and told me she'd seen me around and wondered what my job was and i most assuredly told her I was a cheesemaker. She was about to turn away when I told her that I was really the best cheesemaker in the whole of the windy world and that there'd been a scarcity of milk that prevented me from crafting my marvelous works. I told her I could make cheese that'd turn an old man young and make a magister swallow her tongue. It could raise the dead and impress queen Led and If I only had milk

I'd share with her ilk. I dare say that the mayor was so impressed by my rhyming she said she'd help me get the recognition I deserve as the top cheesemaker and went to talk with some architect. I think I'm finally getting that blessing from Kigok I've always asked for. (I bet That WitchThief guy never grants his most loyal followers their prayers).

14th of Timber

I saw that broker guy trading away out slaughtered animals. "Pyromaniac" I think his name was. I thank Kigok everyday that I wasn't given a name like that. I really would have liked a nice horse stew but I'm not in control of the finances. The funny thing is I overheard the guy talking about a "new diet" as he bought a barrel of donkey milk. I sure hope he's not talking about what I think he's talking about. I've had it up to my mustache with eating those terrible monsters they dig up from that abyss under Failcannon. I'd sooner feed the whole fort than switch to a diet of acid blooded mutant magpies.

Still nothing on that Kigok situation. Is it too much to ask for one woman Kigok? I don't care if she likes shadow banshees or sardonics or even *purring maggots* send me any woman Kigok and I'll treasure her. I really have to find a better hiding place for this thing if Såkzul finds it I'll be even more of a laughing stock.

21st of Timber



When I saw it I quite nearly shit bricks. Aik had told me to bring a bucket to the upper levels so I swiped one from the hospital (who's gonna notice?). To my surprise she's made some kind of complex to produce cheese like the brewery produces beer. I guess she wanted me to get accustomed to the animals before construction was finished. I tried to tell her that the sun was bothering me but she said that a cheesemaker of my caliber could make a fine cheese even in the sunlight. (flattery will get you everywhere) I guess I've got big things ahead of me. Kigok let them realize their mistake before I have to feed the whole fort. I take back what I said about the mutant magpies, they're the candy of the deep.

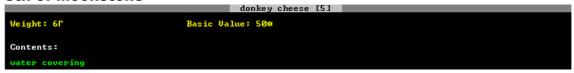
1st of Moonstone

`Robocorn' Edtûledëm, Cheese Maker cancels Make Cheese: Handling dangerous creature.

That's my story and I'm sticking to it. Cows can get pretty dangerous you know. They can gore you without the slightest provocation. It would be unwise to make cheese with a bovine about or it could

smell the creamy sweetness of the cheese you were making and slaughter you right then and there. Aik should be awarding me a medal for handling such a deadly beast in such a cautious manner. A medal and a vacation, because all of this cheesemaking is hard work, or it will be anyway, after my vacation. A big thanks to Kigok who channeled her powers into the fell cows mind and calmed it to a stupor so I could tie it up again.

8th of Moonstone



Well, there it is. My first cheese. The broker told me it would be worth fifty value abstractions on the open market. He asked me if I made it and I told him that I was the head cheesemaker in all of Aluonra and that any cheese I'd make would be worth it's weight in adamantine. The snarky fool blew me off like some silly blowhard. But I'd show him. Making cheese wasn't much harder than brewing and I'm sure I'll be able to get twice as much appraise than any silly brewer got from their brain blastering sunshine or thirst quenching Mushroom ale or whatever my point was. Al I know is that If I stick to my guns and keep my faith in Kigok I'll be the Fromagiester of the Sixth Circle and everyone will realize how important I really am to Failcannon.

16th of Moonstone.

This seems like kind of a funny story. The Captain of the guard dispatches the holy irons to go save *cheese*. Now I thought they had finally realized my importance and I could go back to doing nothing all day but they were really talking about some crippled beggar *named* "Cheese" who was out picking flowers or something when he was ambushed by skeletal horses. One of the horses even gets on the seaward wall that those immigrants snuck over on the other month and these two soldiers joust with it and get knocked off the wall. What a bunch off loonies I hope Kigok blesses their sore heads.



Luckily the irons eventually take down the horse that was menacing "Cheese" and he's welcomed back into the fort. No thanks to those jousters. I guess they'll let anyone in the guard these days.

24th of Moonstone

```
Mosus Zulbanoggez, Dwarven Child has created Erarkisat, a magnetite bracelet!

Press Enter to close window
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It's so exciting to be invited to a party. Some Dwarven child has completed some magnificent magnetic bracelect with moonstone and more magnetite. Sounds like some kind of wizard jewelery to me but I'll take any chance I can get to take a day off of work dealing with dangerous cows and moulding cheese. Thanks for blessing this child Kigok I needed to go to a party. I wonder if Kigok will ever bless me with a vision of the ultimate cheese. I can always dream.

1st of Opal.

That jerkass Såkzul still isn't impressed by my massive dairy complex. He say's it's built on lies and that I've barely made any cheese. He even had the gall to say that

"nobody cares about cheese"

"Then why'd they go save him from the skorse?"

We both had a good chuckle about that one. But he should really be more supportive of my rising role in the world. I don't care if he's a wood burner or a soldier. He shouldn't speak that way to an Accomplished Cheese Maker



8th of Opal.

Today something scary happened.

Those fool guards must have dozed off because the devil skull-horse Sourditch got into the fort



The beast slew a dog right in front of me before going after some unlucky Dwarf named Paniac. The fellow was so heroic as to let a young mother and her child serve as a decoy for him to run away. The mother Canalan made it out okay but the baby was slewn by the great beast. I offered to give Xenos (the father) some cheese for the funeral and he just lashed out at me. I suppose seeing your only child killed by and evil horse makes you less receptive to cheese. I hope it isn't a trend.

24th of Opal

After receiving complaints from various different Dwarves regarding the increasing dearth of cheese I talked with Aik about getting me a few assistants. I also requested a few more cheese presses



"constructed from solid silver"

I said. She seemed to be talking it down so I asked for an office with gold furniture overlooking the filthy sea with glass windows and a short commute from the cheesery. Kigok has truly blessed me because she gave in to all my demands and my room is finally complete. I met with Såkzul again at his totally non-private dining room to rub it in that I had become a Fromagiester while he was stilla lowly wood burner and now nobody could look down on my cheesey prowess. Såkzul still wasn't impressed though, he never cares for my success. he's always keeping me back. Maybe if you found me someone real nice Kigok I could make him truly believe in your majesty. You are the real Fromagistress here.

5th of Obsidian

These assistants are not as helpful as I'd forseen. But I'm sleeping splendidly in this new room. It's not the same as being underground all day but the sun is gone about half the time so it's fairly bearable to have a room near the sea. It's quiet to say the least. Just me and the cheese. And Kigok of course. I can never forget about Kigok. Såkzul doesn't know what he's talking about, I have it way better now that I'm important, he's just jealous of my blessings. Maybe he can be one of my cheese assistants. I bet that would cheer him up

6th of Obsidian

It didn't.

15th of Obsidian

GOBLINS!

```
Snodub Gozruczuz, Goblin Elite Crossbowman
"Snodub Hellmaws"

Snodub Ugsmezurar, Goblin Lasher
"Snodub Mindfulmaligned"

Snodub Nëbstotho, Goblin Bowman
"Snodub Sickbad"
```

A squadron of greenskins decided to sneak over the wall that the skorses and immigrants have been sneaking over in order to rain bolts down upon us fron their high vantage point.

Their aim was mostly atrocious so many of us were able to run away in time but one poor soul called Urist Imiknoriss took nearly seven bolts before falling to the greenskin's barrage



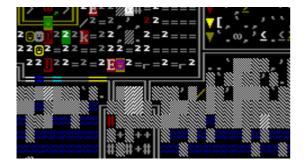
The first of the Holy Irons on the scene was DuckThatQuacks, a novice Swordsdwarf who planned on fighting them aligned on the wall in order to protect us as we fled underground.



It "didn't work" to say the least.



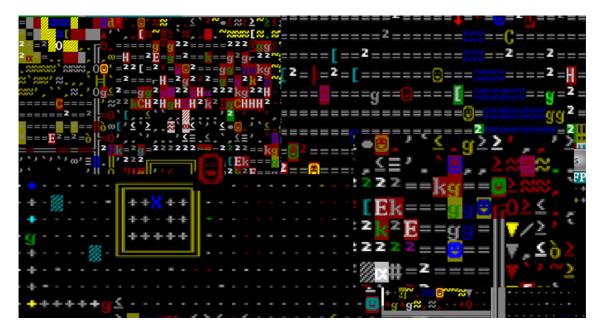
The next warrior present to face the scourge was the militia leader LordSlowpoke who brandishing her warhammer



was knocked over the edge of the wall by a goblin with a whip

LordSlowpoke fought the goblins as they entered the fort from the wall but they overpowered her and drover her down. One of the goblin raiders "Snodub" Declared victory over her corpse and dealt the killing blow.

After Lordslowpoke's death things turned for the worst

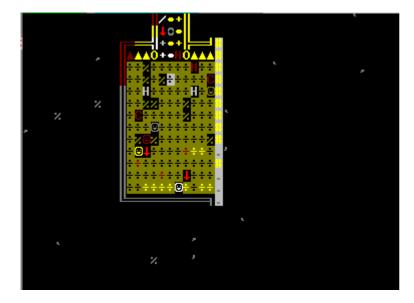


The Goblins began to slaughter everything

As if in a mission from Kigok Herself I took up the mantle of military commander and drafted The most able warriors remaining among us. Such as Grath "The arrow catcher" and Xenos, who had dealt the final blow to Sourditch. I gathered us togeth one time to mount an a offense against the horde.



The casualties were too great I lead what able dwarves I could find down into a food stockpile and began ordering the construction of a wall t separate us from the outside world



We held up for ours in preparation of the goblin onslaught but nothing came. what we discovered was astounding.



as the goblins left they fell into our traps and many were captured and killed. With less than a quarter of our dwarves still living we could not have held them back on our own. I know in my heart that it was Kigok that protected us and our infirm. I feel sorry for all the things I said about Såkzul, may his soul rest in peace. It is currently Obsidian the 20th and will end the year with cheese far from my mind.

1st of Granite 525

Spring has come but winter still lingers with us as the corpses of our friends and family begin to decompose. Aik had decided that anything outside the fort is another potential deathtrap and that we should make their allure invisible to us. I guess she means ignore them, but it's hard. On a lighter note, Zathel says he killed one of the remaining goblins with his pick.



We have trouble mustering any celebratory enthusiasm for his feat, knowing there are still goblins wandering about. I'm still guilty about what I said to Såkzul last. He met his fate to some goblin and I never got to apologize for the way I treated him.

"Cheese is really important now that the livestock is slaughtered"

He would've said, and we'd have laughed together. Please Kigok, you can take back all your blessings to me, just ensure Såkzul has a good afterlife. I want him to be happy when we next meet. I guess it could be sooner than I think.

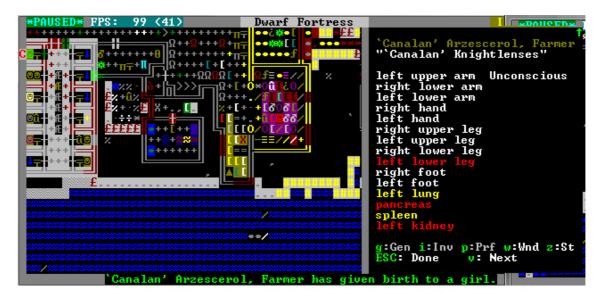
I don't know if I can stand to live in this rotting cesspit any longer. This room only reminds me of how I treated Såkzul if I had been here when the goblins struck I would have been with him now.



Pointless now.

19th of Granite

I've been working at the hospital for weeks now. I don't think I can bear going on because I think I've seen a miracle. One of the patients. A former militia draft named Canalan, gave birth to a daughter. In spite of massive wounds inflicted by goblin foes the baby came out healthy.



I know that Kigok must be watching out for us here in our little slice of hell.

4th of Slate

Another death. We've all been a little antsy since the goblin raid and we've been talking some time to let off steam. Oglokoog took this much farther than I am comfortable with. In the night he pummeled a sleeping woman to death in the middle of the hospital.



He says he did it in a rage but I'm still going to keep my eye on him. With tensions this high anyone could snap at any instant. I'm even starting to miss Såkzul's jokes. I guess I'll talk to Emeraldwind Maybe he could tell me a joke or something. I've just got to keep my anger in check and everything will be alright. Everything will be alright.

5th of slate

I woke up today and everything seems fine. Everything smells like purple and all I have to do is wipe all of that strawberry jam of and everyone will be as good as new. Everything will be fine. Kigok came to me in a dream and told me how to make the best cheese, the *best* cheese, the *bestest* cheese. Beyond the ken of mortal cheesesmiths. But first the strawberry jam, oh the jam. The greenfriends only wanted a spread for thier toast but **Oh The Mess They Have Made**. It's fine because everything will be okay, everything is okay. Everything is the **most** okay. The superlative quality of this **OKAY** is not to be trifled with. Okay. okay. OkAy, oKaY, everything is okay. To make the cheese I must sing the song, the splendid song, the special song, the secret song, the song of the evercow. On high it will hear me. On high it will find me, I will pluck from it's udders the evercurd and my cheese will be on it's way to completion Yes YES OH YES **YES**, YES, YES, YES, OHH, YES, KIGOK YES, !! YES! YES!! YESS! YOU CAN WAKE UP FROM YOUR NAP **SÅKZUL**!!! I HAVE THE TASTIEST SNACK OF ALL!! JUST FOR YOU AND ME AND **KIGOK**!! CHEESE, THE MOST GLOURIOUS

OFCHEESESTHECHEESIESTcheShEoFCHeeSESNOWwho'sUSeleSsYousTupidKids?!?!?/



The Diary of Oglokoog

THE IDIOTS RUINED EVERYTHING AGAIN. I KNEW THE WALL WAS UNSAFE AND I SIMPLY ASSUMED EVERYONE ELSE KNEW AS WELL.

WELL GUESS WHAT - TURNS OUT NO ONE DID. NO WAY IN HELL AM I TELLING THEM. THEY'D BLAME ME FOR FUCKING EVERYTHING UP. MOST OF THE FORTRESS IS DEAD. I CAME HERE NOT SO LONG AGO BUT EVEN I KNOW ALL THE GODDAMN STORIES ABOUT THIS HAPPENING EVERY. ARMOKDAMNED. YEAR. OR SO. YOU GET MY POINT. WHY DOES EVERYONE KEEP DYING SO MUCH FUCK ARGH NO PISSBUBBLES ARRRRNGHHH WHAT THE HELL SOMEBODY WANTS ME TO HELP THEM AGAIN OR SOMETHING- NO, FUCK YOU!

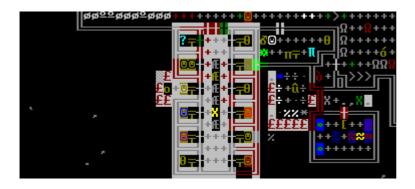
The Life and Times of Kivish Oltarnum

Slate 21st, 525

It's nice to get a gift, even if it's from a madman. Some poor fellow bestowed upon me this journal that chronicled his life. I'm not sure if he wanted me to tell his story or something but I consider the gift to be at the very least. The fellow's obsession with cheese seems a bit unorthodox, but his remaining comrades seem to think he was some kind of master cheese maker. His entries make his incompetence abvious, but perhaps there is a way to use this to my advantage.

As for the fort itself, it surely lives up to its name in the sense of its condition. The place literally reeks of failure from the fetid waters of the blueness to the bloated goblin corpses festering on the parched shores. The smell doesn't really hit you until you're about 200 yards from the shore. At that time, the Coastal winds whip the rotten salty smell at your face at high speeds. There's no way to prepare yourself for it and several of my traveling companions vomited during the approach. It smells almost exactly like some kind of urine, the resemblance is uncanny.

The occupants of the fort are, almost in there entirety, infirm.



Those who aren't crippled are either horridly depressed and throw temper tantrums or are mysteriously nonchalant about dealing with dwarven offal day in and day out, as though they are completely detatched from the reality of their situation. There seems to have been a goblin attack late last year that massacred the entire military force and most of the civilian population. The accounts vary from several warbands with elite leaders to a full army of goblins overrunning the fort. The records, however show that less than 20 goblins were found dead and captured in the fort with around 50 dwarves killed and nearly 14 injured. I cannot express in words how fucking unacceptable that is.

The remaining overseers are weak, which presents many opportunities for me to gain a foothold in this battlewasted cesspool. Led's still cocky about her "success" in Battlefailed. She thinks our kind are sedate and predictable, like ants beneath her feet. She and her administration will learn the follies of her hubris if I have to submerge them all in the red hot lifeblood of the earth.

-Kivish

Slate 26th, 525

Gaining a position in Failcannon was almost too easy. I knew from the journal of a cheese making complex and needed only to remark of the current cheesemakers imminent insanity then to get access to the complex. Aik was too concerned by her collapsing fort to deny anyone enthusiastic an opportunity to contribute to the evergrowing mess that is Failcannon.



All it needs is a little De-Corpsing, and this cheese area will be perfect for my preparations. And if anyone actually wants cheese, I'm at least legally a dairy specialist. If my other skills outweigh it more

then it's simply an advantage for me. A cover job comes in handy when the guards of Graspedseduce come to weed out insubordinants. Which isn't to say I'm bad at Milking.

```
'Kivish' Oltarnum, Milker
"'Kivish' Gildwindy"

Store Item in Stockpile
Competent Swordsdwarf
Competent Shield User
Competent Armor User
Competent Fighter
Competent Dodger
Novice Animal Caretaker
Talented Milker
Novice Ambusher
Competent Observer
```

But those guards will feel my wrath oh so much more after I've gotten my training done here.

-Kivish

Felsite 1st, 525

'EmeraldWind' Öddomvathsith, Woodworker is stricken by melancholy!

My plans may go forward faster than I had anticipated. The previous militia commander of the fort who had been placed in charge after the previous leader perished in the goblin debacle had succumbed to his depression and become unfit to lead the nonexistent fighting force that was assigned to protect Failcannon from its foes.

I quickly rounded up Aik and made my claim for the position. Her indifference to the idea sealed my rise to power. As she tacitly accepted my proposal. As a newly established militia leader my first steps were to gather soldiers to fight under me. Today already I managed to draft a naive woodsdwarf who seemed as though she had barely even lifted an axe before. Her name is Urist Imiknorris and she'll be the first of many to join my New Holy Irons.

Things are going quite swimmingly since my arrival. Everything's looking up

-Kivish

Felsite 15th, 525

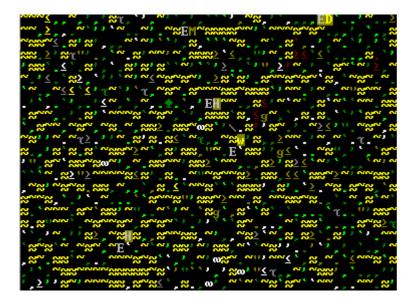
Goblins came today and I was filled with enthusiasm for their slaughter. The mayor was less than enthusiastic about dispatching my squadron and instead opted to lock all of the doors and pretend nobody was home. This is quite possibly the least dwarven thing that has ever been suggested to me by a member of my own kind but I let it slide considering the shaken nature of the mayor. Stone doors perplex the greenskins yet they are somehow capable of cast moulding those gargantuan obsidian monoliths that we dwelt in in Graspedseduce. Their inability or reluctance to use their warhammers on our doors is surely to our advantage. There was a lone casualty. The goblin snipers caught sight of the madman Robocorn dancing naked atop the cheese complex and pegged hm in the throat. The administration's inability to prepare proper graves will most likely result in an Ignominous open burial somewhere.

To say this book is the last remnants of his sorry existence would be accurate. Perhaps it's best he

died not knowing what a madman everyone thought he was.

Felsite 19th, 525

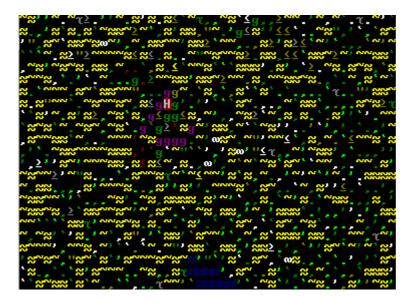
I guess we weren't the real targets of the goblin's wrath after all.



I've mostly been indifferent to elves, I've never had much contact with their kind. From what I've heard in stories, they're an obnoxious bunch of tree worshipping cannibals that attempt to use their numbers to threaten forts. It matters not what their intentions were coming to Failcannon, but they show great prowess in absorbing crossbow bolts.

Felsite 21, 525

I can't say I appreciate their intentions but I can't help but admire the spirit of goblin commerce.



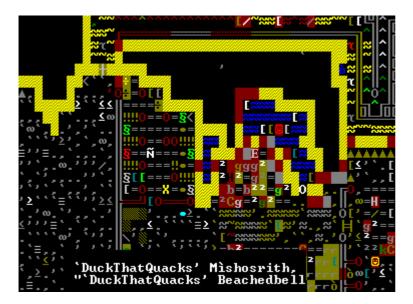
Hematite 2nd, 525

Summer has come and the reeking sea seems to exude its fragrance with even greater gusto in the

balmy summer air. Though lately strange things have been happening around the cheese complex. Parts of the complex have been chilling on their own. Tools have been misplaced at a faster rate than usual and mason workers have complained about a whining noise that permeates the structure. I'll investigate the matter further.

Hematite 10th, 525

I've investigated the strange occurrence and found one thing for sure at its source



Ghosts. I didn't believe in ghosts before I came to Failcannon, but this DuckThatQuacks seems to be a legitimate spectre. The phantom seemed to lament that he was left unburied in such disgrace and returned to nag his loved ones into giving him a final resting place. If I had believed in ghosts it is quite possible I would have been more careful with many of our more unorthodox burial practices.

Regardless, he will not get his wish, we're too busy to haul around sarcophagi. I don't know what kind of enthusiasm he expected when he crossed over back to Failcannon.

Hematite 23, 525

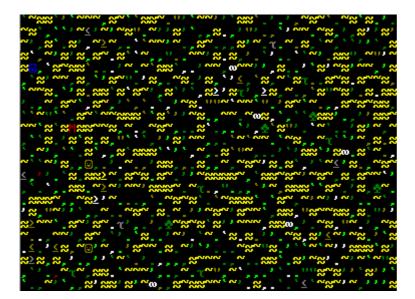
I don't care what Aik says anymore. I'm the military leader. I'll make my will be known with or without her approval. The goblins haven't fallen for her ruse. They've remained here for several weeks, camping just outside our walls.



The dwarves of Failcannon are beginning to stagnate, fewer and fewer jobs are being completed and morale is at an all time low because of the phantoms. I'm drafting a huge lot of them and training them so we can finally establish security from this goblin menace.

Malachite 3rd, 525

Migrants were spotted coming over the hills. The back door was unlocked so the migrants could enter on the off chance the goblins didn't catch them first.



Fortunately for them, they all make it within the haunted aegis of Failcannon before the goblins begin their pursuit.

Malachite 6th, 525

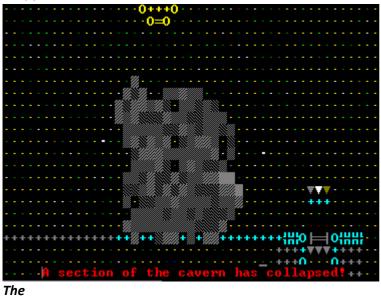
I never thought that goblins would be so perplexed by a locked door.



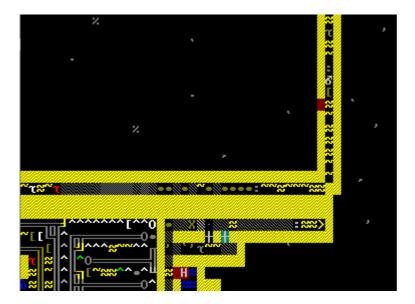
It gives me an Idea that I'll put into motion soon.

Malachite 13, 525

What



Fuck



The goblins were just coming below some of the suspended platforms, I a dwarf was ordered to pull the lever and some huge platform fell through the feeble earth of the plain of ooze through the tunnels we'd bored. revealing us to the goblins. it's almost as though whoever designed this stupid thing wasn't in communication with whoever designed the tunnel.

Malachite 15th, 525

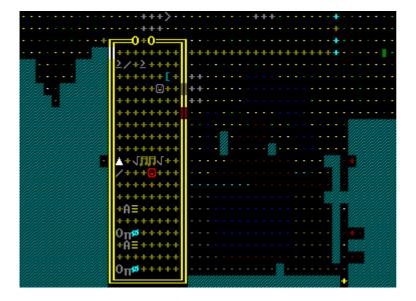
The goblins have returned to their previous position on the plains leaving us no tactical position from which to strike them. Our only chances are to outnumber their crossbowmen with our own. Which could take years as far as the management of this fort is going. I can only train my swordplay in preparation for our next assault.

Galena 1st, 525

The weeks have been quiet. The goblins wait outside our walls waiting for any opportunity to penetrate them.



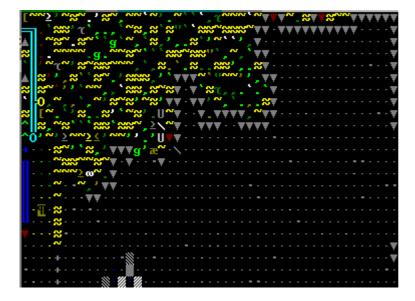
Our new training area above the cheese complex is finished today but I have my doubts that any of these fools will be able to defend themselves.



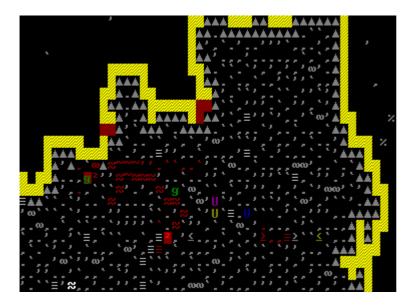
The past weeks have been unproductive and morale has yet to improve. We may very well have to wait out many months before we are powerful enough to take them on. Waiting is not something I'm comfortable with. I'll never be able to kill Led if I spend my whole life hiding from goblins.

Galena 14th, 525

The endless humdrum of training was end briefly today when a caravan was spotted to the east. Humans had come to trade. I'm sure Aik will be more than willing once they overcome our most prominent obstacle: The Goblins.



The Goblins and humans clashed



And the goblins scattered.

There's something to be said for stature, though it's something few dwarves would like to admit. Size is an advantage that cannot be overlooked, but it is far from the be all and end all of battles. likely the goblins were fatigued from thier weeks of camping and could have been dispatched by the Holy Irons once our training regiment was complete. Regardless, the important thing was that the goblins were gone.

Galena 24, 525

The traders had finally come to trade. The humans brought with them many things, but we weren't interested in all of it. Alcohol and weapons were what we were after. I asked for something specific to be imported beforehand. Pyromaniac, the broker seemed rather flustered during the whole ordeal. Offers were made, deals were broken, profanities were uttered, we seized what we wanted from the human caravan and sent it on its way. Pyromaniac refuses to tell me if he got me what I asked for.

Limestone 11th, 525

Times are looking up slightly. Autumn has come and the stench is dying down somewhat. The ghosts have become too commonplace to bother with anymore, and our once threatening alcohol shortage is a thing of the past. I've yet to get that zweihander I was after from the arsenal dwarf. It's existence was confirmed but it's wrapped in too much bureaucratic red tape for me to get my hands on it at this time. I'll be unstoppable when I have it in my posession. none will dare stand before me goblin, Led or otherwise.

Sandstone 2nd, 525

I heard one of my subordinates talking today. something about my absence. Though i have been spending the last few weeks tucked away in the warmth of the forges near the lower barracks it doesn't mean I've abandoned them. I'll just be working on a few things behind the scenes. It may be a risk on my part to keep documenting my plans in this book. Goodbye for now, journal. Perhaps when my rise to power is secured I'll recover you again. the gifts you get from a madman eh?

-Kivish

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: Parts of Duck's turn in the thread are missing their images. There ain't much I can do about that]

TURN 12 - DUCKTHATQUACKS

Ghostbusters

DuckThatQuacks' Diary

It has been several weeks since I arrived at Failcannon. I had had high hopes -- at last, a place where we dwarves could live, free from the mad human queen. Using the lessons learned from the failed experiment at Battlefailed, we could create a mighty fortress that could serve as the focal point for a war of independence.

Alas, what I've found does not live up to those lofty expectations -- a mere thirty-seven dwarves hunkered down in a sprawling nightmare of a fortress. At the moment, Failcannon is worthless as a military bastion. It has numerous weak points -- it is, for example, vulnerable to an amphibious assault.

The "military" consists of a handful of ill-trained dwarves with mismatched equipment. Looking through the stockpiles for higher-quality kit, I found nothing but cheap iron weapons and low-grade gear that was apparently scavenged from goblins.

Nor is there any simple way to order anything new -- the supply chain is clogged up and inefficient.

It would seem that Failcannon has two things in abundance. The first is tallow.

The second is corpses.

Failcannon is littered with the rotting corpses of unfortunate dwarves. It looks like the citizens gave up on proper burials, and simply started piling bodies up wherever they could find space.

And those are only a few of the problems here. I haven't even mentioned the dread beasts that wander the depths, or the whispers of restless spirits stalking the halls of the fort.

Failcannon has a long way to go before it can serve as a bastion of the dwarven independence movement -- indeed, it is in imminent danger of collapsing. It looks like I arrived just in time.

3 Sandstone, 525:

I decided to explain myself and my cause to the mayor today. He seemed largely disinterested, but was willing to put me in command of the military and to listen to my advice on strategic matters. As I left the meeting, I was approached by a dwarf who introduced herself as Andreus IX.

I like a dwarf with a big number after their name; it's a sign of good breeding.

Andreus said she'd overheard my conversation with the mayor and believed in my cause. Since she's been at Failcannon for a while, she said, she can help me out with the administrative details of my job.

We got started immediately. My priorities are securing our perimeter, training a few soldiers, producing equipment, and cleaning up all these corpses. After we filled out the proper forms and sent them for the mayor's signature, Andreus asked if she could form a special team to investigate

reports of paranormal activities. I've given her permission.

4 Sandstone, 525:

Tragedy struck today, as a neglected child died. I swear, one day Queen Led will pay for this.

5 Sandstone, 525:

Andreus has told me that nearly half the dwarves in the fort claim that they are unemployed, even though there is plenty to do. I tried to bring this up with the mayor, but he brushed me off. Doesn't he realize that that's no way to treat someone who has commanded dwarven troops who fought for his freedom?

8 Sandstone, 525:

I finally figured out why so many dwarves weren't doing anything. It seems that two levels of the fort had become disconnected -- there were stairs down from one level, but no stairs up from the next. The situation has been rectified, and the dwarves are now back to work.

I meant to ask Andreus how she knew that so many dwarves were idle when she couldn't go talk to them (what with the lack of stairs), but it slipped my mind when we met to discuss siege weapon production. I'll be sure to ask her later.

10 Sandstone, 525:

Now that the workers can finally move about, we managed to seal the gap in the southern wall that left us open to attack from the sea.

In other news, I convinced the mayor to order all our domestic animals caged, so that they'd stop getting in the way. Although he agreed with my suggestion, he was incredibly rude -- he didn't even have the courtesy to stop eating while we were discussing it. I don't like his disrespectful attitude.

12 Sandstone, 525:

More dwarves have come to Failcannon, no doubt attracted by the promise of freedom from Queen Led's tyranny. There were eight in all. None had any particular skills, but we can always use more dwarves to the work the furnaces or bury corpses.

14 Sandstone, 525:

Some of the recent arrivals pointed out to me that there is a vulnerability by Failcannon's entrance that allows enemies onto the walls, where they can fire down into the courtyard (in fact, Andreus tells me that just such a thing happened not too long ago). I've ordered it walled off.

22 Sandstone, 525:

The mayor walked into my office today -- he didn't even knock! -- and handed me a pile of orders, without even bothering to speak to me. I'm getting sick of this bad treatment.

24 Sandstone, 525:

One of our masons suddenly dropped what he was doing and began speaking in an unknown language.

He has run to a workshop and begun gathering various objects. Andreus has asked if she can observe him -- she thinks that it might give her insight into how to deal with the ghosts that some of the dwarves have been talking about. I agreed that this sounded like a good idea (I didn't bother to check with the mayor; he would have just made a fuss about it).

27 Sandstone, 525:

Andreus reports that using what she learned from the possessed mason, her Paranormal Investigation Group has successfully ended our ghost problem.

Good, one less thing to worry about.

7 Timber, 525:

Our possessed mason finally began working on something today. I thought Andreus might be interested in watching him, but she said something about a spirit that won't talk to her being useless, or something. I was going to ask her what she meant but I suddenly remembered that I had to go inspect the defenses.

11 Timber, 525:

Our mason finished today, emerging with a bizzarely decorated weapon rack. He remembers little about making it, but insists that it is called Ugoskamut Dalzatsuvas (literally, "Hollowripper the Matched Luster").

12 Timber, 525:

Supplies! I've ordered the drawbridge opened to let the traders in, but nobody is doing it. I've half a mind to go pull that lever myself.

13 Timber, 525:

It's a good thing nobody opened the drawbridge -- the caravan has come under attack by goblins. I called up the militia, thinking to go to their aid, but as more and more goblins burst out of the trees, it became clear that there were simply too many.

The trader and his horse were slaughtered. The lone caravan guard put up a terrific fight, killing three goblins and maiming two more, but he was overwhelmed by the five squads of goblins.

The goblins are out of range of our crossbows, so we can't shoot them from the walls. Since we're heavily outnumbered, I've ruled out the possibility of a sortie. We'll have to wait the goblins out.

20 Timber, 525:

The goblins are still out there. We have everything we need inside the fortress, but I'm getting impatient. Andreus suggested letting them in, counting on the traps to thin their numbers before we engage them in the courtyard. It sounds like a good idea, but I want to build more traps, first.

27 Timber, 525:

The mayor burst into my office today as I was discussing logistics with the ever-helpful Andreus.

"Urist!" he shouted, "what's this I hear about even more defense spending?"

"It's for traps, Mr. Mayor," I said. "We're going to use them to kill off the goblins."

"Traps?" he said. "What about all those weapons you're making? All that armor? I thought *that* was supposed to protect us from the goblins!"

"Our soldiers aren't well-trained enough--" I tried to explain.

"What about the siege weapons?" he demanded.

"We still haven't gotten to the point where we can produce high-quality parts," I said, patiently, "and even if we had, the goblins aren't in a position where we could hit them. That's why we have to build

pillbox--"

"And spend even more?" the mayor said, "that project is already 930% over budget!"

I was getting angry.

"Oh, and what would you have us focus on?" I asked. "Worthless, empty hallways?"

"Public art projects?"

"No," the mayor said, "I would focus on *amulets*. They are vital to our prosperity, and our cultural legacy. In fact, we *will* focus on amulets. I'm the mayor, and I'm in charge here."

With that, he stormed out of the room.

I was fuming.

"Does he have any idea what he's doing?" I asked. "He's putting our very lives at risk! At a time when we're surrounded by enemies, no less."

"It is short-sighted, sir," Andreus agreed. "He is becoming a significant impediment to our cause."

"I just don't understand how somebody like that got to be in charge," I said. "Failcannon needs a leader who understands how to move this fort forward."

Andreus gave me a significant look. I nodded, and she strode out of the room.

4 Moonstone, 525:

Mining is such a dangerous profession.

A section of the cavern has collapsed!

This morning there was an almighty crash, and the miners reported that there had been a major cave-in. All dwarves were accounted for except the mayor, leaving us to conclude that he had been caught in the collapse.

```
Oglokoog mayor's mandate has ended
Oglokoog Weaver has been crushed under the collapsing ceiling
```

Since his body was presumably crushed under hundreds of tons of rock, there was no possibility of an autospy burial. Instead, we carved a commemorative slab.

```
This is a schist memorial to Oglokoog / The slab reads ※In memory of Oglokoog / 457 - 520 / Slayer of Adil
Trannellanced※
```

It doesn't look like he'll be missed -- he is remembered primarily as a brutal tyrant.

```
Beating
201 Days in Prison

Officer: None Assigned

Building Destruction

Murder

SeInjured Party: Ledi Crazy Cat Lady
Disorderly Conduct

Injured Party: Stray Horse (Tame)

Building Destruction
```

The dwarves promptly elected a new mayor, choosing Pyromaniac to lead them.

5 Moonstone, 525:

Andreus and I met with the new mayor today, and I told him of the disagreements I'd had with the former mayor. I also suggested that he contemplate mining accidents draft new mine safety regulations, because we wouldn't want a repeat of yesterday's tragedy.

6 Moonstone, 525:

The new mayor informed me today that he was passing legislation that meant that his signature would no longer be required to issue orders -- all that is needed is an official stamp. He kindly offered me such a stamp, and suggested that since he would rather not be bothered with the day-to-day running of the fort, I should take up the position of overseer.

Urist McArthur Overseer

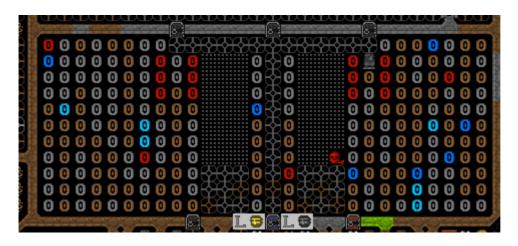
I humbly accepted, and Andreus agreed to take up an official position as my advisor.

Andreus IX Advisor

Things are looking up for Failcannon.

12 Moonstone, 525:

It was with great pleasure today that we buried the last of the corpses inside of the fortress. There are still bodies that we can't get to (outside the fortress, or in the ocean), but for now it's a relief to not have to look at decaying dwarves stuffed into corners while trying to eat.



3 Opal, 525:

The mayor approached me today and said that he has been thinking about it, and he'd like to strike some small blow for the dwarven independence movement. I said it sounded like a fine plan, and he issued a proclamation saying that we would provide no thrones for Queen Led to sit on.

Mandates: Export of thrones Prohibited

It's mostly a symbolic gesture, but inspiring nonetheless.

7 Opal, 525:

While we were trying to fish corpses out of one of the lakes in the courtyard, we accidentally let it burst through an embankment.



It flooded the courtyard and made a mess, but it'll dry out and we managed to get the corpses and bury them properly.

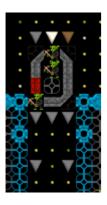
10 Opal, 525:

The goblins that arrived last autumn are still out there. They occasionally skirmish with the local wilddeath

The Goblin Spearman bites The Skeletal Horse in the head tearing the muscle! The Goblin Spearman latches on firmly!

but they show no signs of leaving on their own.

I decided today that our traps were adequate, and that it was time to deal with the goblins. I've ordered all civilians underground, stationed the militia in the courtyard, and ordered the drawbridge lowered. The goblins are swarming in.



11 Opal, 525:

Victory! The goblins charged headlong into our traps, which did their work with grim efficiency. While they flailed around in the entrance, I ordered our tiny militia to open fire. Surrounded by deadly traps and under heavy fire from our marksdwarves, the goblins fell back across the drawbridge and fled. All told, over a dozen were killed or captured. We suffered no casualties.

13 Opal, 525:

Andreus has requested that she be allowed to interrogate the prisoners captured during the goblin attack. I agreed to her request, and to her subsequent request that she be allowed to construct a special interrogation facility. Those both seemed reasonable. I also agreed to her request for numerous grates to "let the blood drain into the ritual chamber", although I'm not sure why -- that doesn't make much sense, now that I think about it. Still, Andreus is very helpful so it's worth indulging her little quirks.

7 Obsidian, 525:

shale Throne toppled by Ducim Geshudelbel Ghostly Dyer

I'm receiving reports of more ghosts causing trouble in the fortress. Andreus has informed me that her Paranormal Investigation Group is on the case.

23 Obsidian, 525:

A breathless dwarf burst into my office today, declaring that there was an emergency.

Sodel Zanegkel Suturer cancels Drink: Interrupted by Forgotten Beast

His pleasant drink had been interrupted by a dread beast from below! I called up the militia and ordered all civilians to evacuate to the surface.

We combed the fortress, but found no sign of the creature. I went back and found the dwarf who had raised the alarm, who admitted that he hadn't so much *seen* a beast as heard a sound through the walls that *might* have been a beast.

This is intolerable! Such a false alarm could provide a fatal distraction at a critical moment. It looks like we're going to need to stricter rules about what dwarves can and can't say if we want to stay focused on our goal (freedom for dwarfkind).

28 Obsidian, 525:

It's the eve of a new year. Tomorrow will be a day of celebration, but today was a sombre one: Failcannon's longest-surviving inhabitant passed away this morning.

The Stray Dog (Tame) has died of old age

In other news, Andreus and I have been working on some major changes to the way the fortress is run, and we plan to introduce them early next year.

1 Granite, 526:

Despite my heroic efforts, Failcannon is stagnating. Our production has hardly increased at all, and our militia remains tiny and inadequate. It has become clear to me that the problem is the inefficient civilian administration. As such, I am dissolving the civilian government.

From now on, the mayor shall serve a purely ceremonial role; all decision-making power shall be vested in the head of Failcannon's military.

To maintain order, I am establishing a new guard force. They shall be called the Legions of Civic-Minded Dwarves Devoted to Maintaining the Peace, Administering Justice, Improving the Lives of All Dwarfkind, and Filling Our Enemies with Terror (or "Legions of Terror" for short). For her record of distinguished service, I have given Andreus a commission in the military and placed her in command of the Legions.

Now that I finally have unfettered control of the fortress, I can lead our people to freedom and prosperity.

17 Granite, 526:

Already, my policies are vindicated.

One of our dwarves has been struck with inspiration, and is busily gathering materials in a mason's workshop. Such a thing could never have happened without my canny and benevolent rulership.

2 Slate, 526:

After working non-stop for almost a week, Datan has emerged with his masterpiece.

It's name means "The Bent Vessel." I shall have to find a suitable place for it.

5 Slate, 526:

Conscripts Migrants Fellow travelers on the road to freedom!

It would seem that my diligent efforts have made Failcannon a beacon to all dwarfkind, so that they flock to it despite its reputation as a dangerous place. I sent my Legions of Terror out to draft protect the new arrivals from a pair of murderous groundhogs. There were ten migrants in all; about half volunteered to join the military.

26 Slate, 526:

There's a rumor sweeping the fort that a deceased bowyer has risen from the dead, determined to trouble the living. Andreus has assured me that she's on the case.

14 Felsite, 526:

A filthy kobold was found in the courtyard today, trying to steal our hard-earned wealth! It attacked a bystander as it fled, but only managed to slash her cloak.

16 Felsite, 526:

More kobolds! It looks like the one we discovered a few days back must have told them stories of our wealth. Fortunately, we chased these ones off before they could take anything.

17 Felsite, 526:

A particularly skillful thief managed to make it all the way inside the fortress before being discovered.

Although this one was, like the others, driven off before it could steal anything, I can't help thinking that such a concerted effort at robbery is tantamount to an act of war.

18 Felsite, 526:

I didn't expect this. A large party of elves has arrived, saying they wish to trade with us. I ordered the Legions of Terror out to intimidate escort them safely inside.

20 Felsite, 526:

The elves are safely inside, and they gave us wood, alcohol, and exotic animals in exchange for several sacks of dirty laundry.

28 Felsite, 526:

We tried some more trading with the elves today, offering some old knick-knacks in exchange for some of their more interesting food. Unfortunately, one of the items was decorated with wood, and the elves got offended and refused to do any more business with us. I really don't understand it -- they'll happily give us a barrel of fine wine in exchange for a few blood-soaked rags, but offer them something with just a tiny bit of wood and they get all upset.

I was sorely tempted to kill them all, but decided that it would be better if they left and spread the word of our wealth and power.

4 Hematite, 526:

Andreus reports that the latest poltergeist problem has been resolved. She is remarkably skilled in handling such occult matters.

7 Hematite, 526:

As I was walking to the dining hall today, I overheard dwarves complaining about me. "Power-hungry tyrant", somebody said! While I thoroughly support free speech and lively debate, outright sedition is intolerable! If we are going to champion the cause of dwarven freedom, we must have stability -- such dangerous talk much be stopped. I've ordered the Legions to carry out an investigation.

9 Hematite, 526:

My Legions of Terror uncovered a cowardly plot to unseat me! I had them round up the ringleaders.

To confuse any other rebels that might be lurking in the fort, I had them arrested on the charges of exporting banned items, rather than charges of treason. I can't let the rebels know that I'm on to them.

26 Hematite, 526:

Ha! The nay-sayers in the rebellion all claim that I'm a failure, but eight more dwarves arrived to join the cause of freedom!

28 Hematite, 526:

Today, Andreus informed me that she was ready to begin interrogating the prisoners taken in the last goblin attack. I told her to go right ahead, and I agreed to let her execute them when she was done (she called it "sacrificing" them, but that was probably just a slip of the tongue).

7 Malachite, 526:

Another dread beast has come to trouble our glorious fortress! The constant menace of Them Below must be dealt with! Not today, but someday soon...

15 Malachite, 526:

I've determined the perfect task for The Bent Vessel, the artifact floodgate that an inspired dwarf produced last Slate. It shall hold back the sea itself!

And when it is opened, the current shall sweep the bodies of our fallen comrades into the tunnels where we can bury them properly.

16 Malachite, 526:

This is most curious -- when we began to drain the sea, the corpses *were* swept towards our access tunnel, but then they simply vanished. This can only mean one thing: those worthless rebels sabotaged the operation! It's bad enough that they challenge my benevolent rule, but now they have dishonored our fallen comrades! The rebel leaders in prison have been looking suspiciously happy.

I've ordered their rations reduced.

3 Galena, 526:

One of our workers has been inspired by my glorious example! He is rushing towards the forges.

5 Galena, 526:

Erib claimed a forge, grabbed a single bronze bar, and got to work. I like his directness.

9 Galena, 526:

Erib has completed the mighty chain Evenedfords! Andreus asked if she could have it, and I said she could. She looked pleased, and as she walked off I thought I heard her muttering something about a "ritual chamber" and being able to "restrain the gods themselves", but it was probably just my imagination. Or, worse yet, a plot by those dastardly rebels to sow discord between myself and my trusted lieutenant! They will pay...

17 Galena, early morning, 526:

One of the imprisoned rebel leaders died today. It seems that somebody forgot to bring her anything to drink. All I can say is that she deserved it.

17 Galena, mid-morning, 526:

The goblins are here! Is it any coincidence that they showed up so soon after the rebel leader died? I think not! They obviously hope to avenge their ally's death! Where is my sword? To arms!

Bah! More goblins? It matters not, for I AM INVINCIBLE!

17 Galena, early-afternoon, 526:

The sound of crossbow bolts thudding into my enemies signaled the arrival of my Legions of Terror. They quickly finished off the goblins.

On the horizon, I noticed another, friendlier group approaching.

But yet more goblins are charging towards the human flank!

The caravan guards are forming up while the traders race towards the fortress, and my Legions of Terror and I are on our way to help out. I've spotted the enemy leader -- a great hulking goblin with a massive two-handed sword. I've ordered my soldiers to leave him to me.

17 Galena, early-evening, 526:

Victory! All invaders have been killed or driven off, and none of our soldiers or the humans were killed! A kidnapper and a thief tried to sneak in during the chaos, but the human guards discovered them, killing the snatcher and driving off the thief.

For her courage in battle, I have bestowed Cog Walledpassion, a humble soldier, with the title "Helmed Violence-Plane of Smoothness." It is a noble title for a noble dwarf that accurately reflects the fact that she is one smooth, helm-wearing violence-plane.

After I made the announcement, I overheard some dwarves whispering that I've gone mad. I would have them thrown in prison if the charges weren't so ridiculous. Me? Mad? Would a mad dwarf have made the far-sighted decision to bolster our strategic cheese reserves?

I think not.

21 Galena, 526:

What? More cowardly goblins, lurking in the trees, waiting for a time when civilians were outside the fortress -- no doubt they were told by the rebels that now would be a fine time to strike! My Legions of Terror crushed them all, but not before they slew three brave dwarves.

27 Galena, 526:

We traded with the humans today, offering a variety of trinkets in exchange for wood, drink, seeds, and food. I made sure to get all of their cheese (they had a lot), since I'm not sure that domestic production will allow us to build a sufficiently large reserve.

5 Limestone, 526:

I've ordered the militia to begin limited surface patrols. This should suppress the wilddeath population and allow us to complete the roads.

7 Limestone, 526:

The second of the imprisoned rebel leaders has died after months of neglect a hunger strike.

24 Limestone, 526:

Another horror! Here to raid our cheese stockpiles, no doubt. If only we had the dwarfpower, I'd show these disgusting creatures a thing or two.

26 Limestone, 526:

The mayor has declared that only Failcannon should enjoy the rousing music of the trumpet.

I couldn't agree more. Without trumpets to inspire them, our enemies will have a harder time marching into battle. Nonetheless, I've had the mayor flogged for overstepping his authority.

26 Sandstone, 526:

At last, we have broken the final rebel leader!

All internal dissent has been crushed, and my rule is secured forever! The Legions of Terror shall hold a parade.

27 Sandstone, 526:

I was awakened from my sleep last night by somebody moaning:

"Cheeeeeeeeeese. Need cheeeeeese. CHEESE!"

Somebody is out to raid our cheese stockpiles! Andreus says this is probably another spirit, and she can deal with it, but she doesn't think it will actually take our cheese. I hope she's right.

Later in the day, ten more dwarves arrived to join us!

1 Timber, 526:

We completed the roads today. I have withdrawn our troops to give them a rest -- we don't have the dwarfpower to patrol every month of the year.

6 Timber, 526:

The incessant demands for cheese have finally stopped. I'm pleased to report that whatever it was failed to get any of our precious cheese. We now have over a hundred units in our strategic cheese reserve.

13 Timber, 526:

Another spirit is rumored to be wandering the fortress, overturning furniture. It is doubtless searching for our hidden cheese stockpiles! It must be stopped!

19 Timber, 526:

A caravan has arrived, carrying vital goods. Like cheese. Andreus says that maybe I should focus on something other than cheese, but she is wrong. See! Our diligent efforts have attracted the attention of a great cheesesmith!

20 Timber, 526:

The caravan has come under attack! I'm calling up the militia.

No! The cheesesmith has been waylaid by another party of goblins!

NOOOOOOO!!! CHAAAAARGE!!!!

21 Timber, 526:

We have triumphed again, avenging the poor cheesesmith, but it is a bittersweet victory. Cog Walledpassion, the hero of the previous battle, was gravely injured and had to be carried from the field.

I hope that she lives, for she is truly a vicious warrior: during the battle, she bit a goblin's head off.

The caravan guards drove off the band that attacked them, but a guard and a trader were killed. The remaining merchants are just standing there, dumbstruck.

26 Timber, 526:

The merchants finally wandered off today.

1 Moonstone, 526:

My reign is now completely secure and immune to any and all challenges. As such, I am going to delegate the non-military aspects of my job to another. I shall maintain control of the militia, but day-to-day management of the fortress will be left to somebody else. Who, you ask?

My daughter, of course. I have no doubt that she will be a wise and competent administrator who will certainly not be anyone's puppet.

In light of the past year's goblin attacks, I've reorganized the military's schedule -- we can't patrol year-round, but we *can* patrol heavily when we expect caravans. I've also begun training two new squads, The Creative Seals and The Trumpets of Wilting. They'll need better equipment before they can be sent into battle, though (it may be time to start mass-producing suits of bronze armor).

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to go drive off a skeletal horse that is giving some of our dwarves trouble.

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: More missing pictures with Dariush. Apparently, the lack of images makes the update seems more insane. (In my opinion, anyway). Not that this is a bad thing.]

TURN 13 - DARIUSH

Awesome tower of awesome doors

Journal of Rovod Bermesir, Early Winter of 526.

Cough.

Cough.

I'm still alive.

I stared at the ceiling of the low chamber, funny circles swimming before my eyes, dust from the most recent cave-in still settling around.

A voice in my head boomed:

From this day I shall be known as Dariush the Third, the ruler of this fortress.

The thought wasn't mine.

Journal of Dariush The Third, Early Winter of 526.

Today, on third day of my awesome reign I'll being the first two projects of awesome - first, a shaft of totally awesome size that leads straight into magma sea from our fort, and second, a DOOR MONUMENT. Yep.

But for the first project, I need to dig some earth and being the only miner in the fortress and thus not being able to be bothered, I started expanding our mining squadron by careful process of cross-examination, reviewing of resumes and test runs.

"Hey! You there! What are you doing?"

"I'm just a simple potash maker, m'lord."

"Fuck that. You'll be a miner."

See? Totally awesome.

Today among the ordinary useless news I received a note about some dissector's death. Apparently, skeletal horses are running rampant right on our roof. I guess they'll need to be put down... And it's as good time as any to learn to use the military.

Holy shit. I repeat, holy shit. I claim this and I will stand by those words even if I'm set on fire. The accessway to the barracks has stairs leading down to earth... but not quite reaching it. However, that's not a cause for concern. The fact that there are patches of floor *fucking levitating* near is.

Directly underneath.

See any way for those patches to be supported? I don't.

Today I went to oversee the construction of the Door Monument. Apparently, this place has seen so much bloodshed that *the air itself is covered in blood*.

This place is so awesome. Today I got news that some poor recruit died under our forges. When I went there to investigate, I saw a giant forgotten beast wrestling with another recruit who in a fit of awesomeness neglected even to wear any armor. *sigh*

Holy shit, I've just seen an ocean wave rolling through a wall.

This place becomes more awesome with every passing awesome moment of awesomeness!

Holy shit, the horses kicked three recruits to death while I've been waiting for someone to come down there to the beast and wall it off. Apparently our workers have more pressing concerns than terrifying ageless beasts one corridor away from rampaging through the fortress, vanquishing all that breathes. Like moving that sock. Ah.

sound of trumpets

Thus ends the fifth battle first month of my totally awesome reign. *sigh*

The insanity continues!

Today our hunter who for some reason lives near forges along with his/her spouse went to bed. Or tried to. He went down the corridor that contains the shortest path to his bedroom, bumped into forgotten beast, turned his back and took the other way. Seriously.

More and more people fall prey to the hooved reapers. Out of 20 people in our military, only 12 11 9-7 remain. I've ordered all outside activities stopped, but people don't listen... Well, fuck them.

Holy shit.

There are two beasts crammed into this tile and one more in mirrored tile to the left. They seem unable to move. Holy shit.

Okay, since the outside world is off-limits now, I'm going to move the barracks inside. Prepare for awesomeness.

Holy shit, all three beasts got out. I ordered the wall built to contain them, but the idiot builder tried to wall himself in. When I canceled the construction, he ran away and beasts got out into the fortress. This is awesome.

Everything is going to hell. The combined forces of all our soldiers are unable to contain the onslaught of Espir the Skink, Edir the Shrew, Zolak the Slug and Edu the Stegosaurid. (wait... there are four of them now?...) Our forge level is one large spot of miasma, blood and corpses. I need to do something and I don't know what I can...

There are only twenty-eight of us now.

I'm sitting in a corner in my rotting clothes, clutching my trusty pick in my hands.

There are screams coming from above and from below. They are interspaced by clack-clacks and eerie neighing of monstrosities above, the ululating blood-curling cries of monstrosities below and joyful shouts of the sock-wielding monstrosities in corridors. I don't even know whom of them I fear more. Chanting the holy mantra of wee-pee-el, I resist the urge to join my fellows in their mindless orgy of sock delivery.

Using the third sight gained after the recent cave-in when I started writing this journal, I tracked the headmost beast just as it was nearing the drawbridge I ordered built a month ago. The bad part? Those plans remained just that - plans. I've personally seen countless dwarves sauntering over the mark on the floor without as much as noticing it. Now the mark is smudged by the trail of Zolak's horryfing body.

I've consolidated the remains of our military into a single squad of whopping three ass-biters and went to dig out the new barracks - at least hidden by stone masses I will be invisible to passing beasts.

My guess was correct - Zolak went up the stairs without stopping to rip off my head. However, Andreux IX, who was battling it at the time wasn't nearly so lucky.

All right, this is it. I'm taking my pick to the fucker's head.

Something tells me this idea is already doomed.

I can't believe I lost my pick on the way here. Hasty retreat is underway...

Oh god. While I was looking for my pick *another* forgotten beast ambushed me on the surface. The results weren't pretty.

Is that my body lying over there? Looks like it...

Journal of Rovod Bermesir, Early Winter of 526.

Cough.

Cough.

I'm still alive.

I stared at the ceiling of the low chamber, funny circles swimming before my eyes, dust from the most recent cave-in still settling around.

The horrible image of stegosaur standing over my headless body still lingered before my eyes.

I tried wiggling my fingers and succeeded. I guess this wouldn't have happened if my head was lying

several feet from my body. So, I'm alive.

I picked my sorry shape up, dusted myself off and went off to govern this hellhole. I've got a long day ahead.

Still vividly remembering my previous life, the first thing I did was assigning training duties to squads and ordering four forges to produce bronze axes non-stop.

Journal of Dariush The Third, Early Winter Spring of 5267.

I should drink less. However incredibly awesome dwarven booze is, it is nothing compared to awesomeness of three-month consiousness. According to my assistants, nothing of note happened except a pink rhino forgotten beast rampaging through fortress, ripping off toes and fingers, so I think I didn't miss much.

The first order of the new year would be construction of new bedrooms for everyone. *Fractal* bedrooms.

Plagiarism is awesome.

Next, I'm making a huge 'WELCOME' sign at our gates, made out of pure gold:



[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: It was actually a "FUCK YOU", but the image was lost, so I was forced to use this one instead.]

Our mayor doesn't have *any* bedroom, never mind office, tomb, etc.? Seriously?

Everyone who praises the magnificense of ancient monuments omits one important thing - how boring it is to oversee their construction. Especially if your builders are insane midgets who are more interested in dragging thaaat sock over theeeere rather than building...

By the way, did I mention that I'm constructing a pumpstack to pour magma over all those fuckers who killed me in my previous incarnation? Yeah, I totally am.

Also, my Door Monument is progressing nicely. Here's it's first level.

Glory to me, Dariush the Builder!

Damn, I only now noticed that I'm building those pumps out of bronze, and bronze isn't kosher for Armok. *sigh* At least I didn't get far into construction so it isn't too late to start over...

The treehuggers have arrived. At last some real training for our military...

Mwahahaha!

MWAHAHAHAHA!!!!!

One of our metalcrafters decided to make some artifact and he needs yarn cloth for it. Not silk cloth or plant, of which we have hunderds of tons, but *yarn*! This is so unfair... Oh, and we have no way to get it. Good bye, poor Muthkat Plainspaints!

Today my daily report contained something... strange.

I reread the message several times, but it's contains didn't change. I guess this place is even more screwed up than I imagined. Holy shit.

After almost half a year those fuckers finally got around to making the pumps. In honor of this, the yarn-demanding mooder went insane. Berserk, specifically. Legionairre of Terror, specifically. I would have posted an awesome screenshot, but other than two bolt strikes there's nothing interesting happening because of it... ::)

Great. An ambush was all we ever lacked.

I'm recalling all civilians and let the cage traps handle it.

Second ambush showed up almost immediatly. They took some mook's life and brutally beat Xenos.

Xenos withstood an assault of an axegoblin and several bowgoblins. However, then I saw Urist McArthur walk out of the gates against all orders, bash the axegoblin's head in and then chase away the archers. Holy shit.

Two more ambushes. This becomes more awesome with every... wait, I already said this... didn't I?... It's all blurred...

Also, why the hell don't alert levels override shedules?!

Hooray, the first level of my Door Monument is finished!

A recent cave-in spoiled the look of the leftmost doors and the refuse laying around isn't pretty either, but this is 81 schist doors, and this is 1/9th of my future monument! Triple hooray for my awesomeness!

Second level finished - much cleaner than the first.

We've got another mooder, this time I don't even know what he lacks - he requests a whole bunch of things, so I abandoned him, since what we don't already have I probably won't be able to get in time.

sniff The reaper takes his toll despite all heroic efforts of our warriors...

An ettin came, nearly killed a marksdwarf, but at last moment Urist McArthur arrived to save the day... Sounds familiar?

So, it was a year since I've picked up the overseer duties over here. Tradition says that every overseer must give up his position after twelve months. However, Queen's orders say that every overseer must give up his duties on 1st Hematite. Thus, fuck tradition.

The trade entrance construction is stalled. No cage traps were constructed because of lack of mechanisms. Simultaneously, almost 20 dwarves at any given moment were idle. Enraged, I gave them all orders to build mechanisms. That didn't do anything. (how did you guess?...) I stormed off to mechanic's workshops. Or rather tried to.

Looking back over reports, it appears that some ghost toppled some door. What report didn't specify was that this was *the door to the fucking aquifer*.

This place is oh so fucked up.

Whoever built this, my plea to thou:

WHY?!

Blahblahblah

[Rest of Dariush's Turn: "I'm too lazy to write in-character (or at all), so here's a quick summary: Entrance sign - finished;

Door Monument (above courtyard) - partly finished;

Pumpstack (Shift+F2) - pumps themself finished on 2/3 (though building the topmost one that faces the cavern would be difficult), space for future axles is being dug out;

Trade Entrance (to the east of courtyard) - supports and walls are finished, only cages and links remain. PLEASE read instructions on the water before doing anything with it!

Fractal bedroom (Shift+F3) - fully dug out, halfway smoothed, one-fourth of beds are finished;

Squad training must be reviewed and fixed (I tried to, but failed miserably:();

I produced lots of armor and bronze axes, so more squads are welcome;

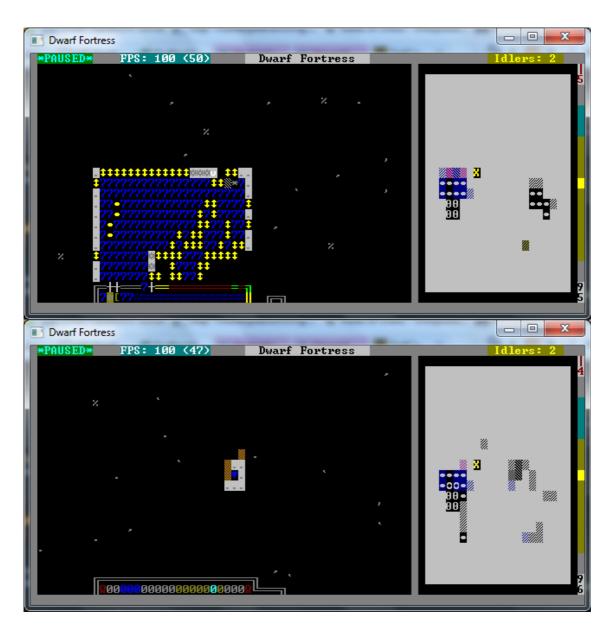
The central stairway is flooded on five levels out of six. I forbade all doors and built other ways, but if someone could close the leak in topmost chamber, it would be awesome."]

TURN 14 – URIST IMIKNORRIS

Chekhov's door

Diary of Urist Imiknorris, 1st Granite

Apparently I'm in charge of the fortress now. Must have been one hell of a party last night. Anyway, the first thing to catch my attention was the state of the central stairway, and I believe I have found the cause:



I found some notes left by an overseer early in the fort's life:

"While digging the new dining room we encountered a slight problem."

Apparently the digging was interrupted by damp stone and the miners decided to see where all that water was coming from. A ghost seems to have destroyed the rightmost door, letting the water into the middle of the fortress. Obviously the water itself is a secondary problem and nothing can be done until the aquifer is sealed back up. The hole in the aquifer is currently feeding a well and a pump which is itself feeding another well, so I may have to be cautious in my solution. I decided to go up to the surface and see if anything could be done from there.





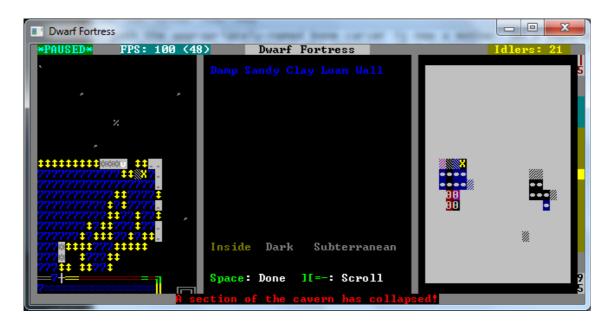
What luck! A section of natural wall is sitting right above the breach point. I'll give the order to drop it into the depths immediately after I get rid of the stuff in its path.

It occurs to me that I have yet to choose a name for myself as leader. That changes today, in part because of the plan to seal the aquifer, and the success (so far) thereof. I may be an animal caretaker, but my interests are much more mechanical in nature.



Pictured is the new bone bridge that will be serving as a garbage disposal for the rest of my rule. But enough of that - the collapse went perfectly:





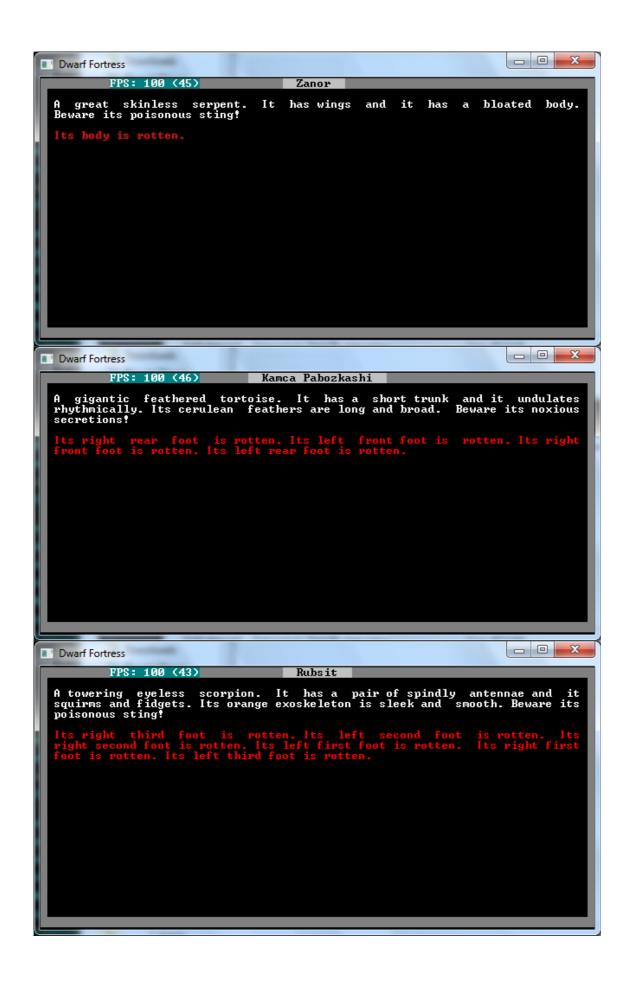
Now we just have to drain the flooded area.

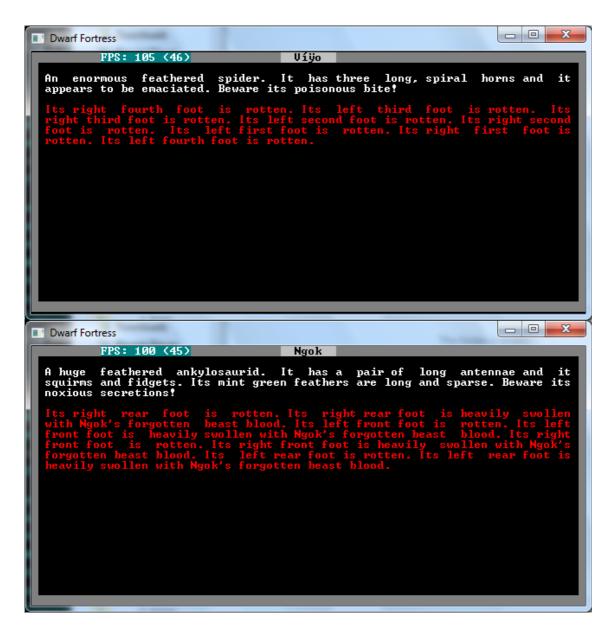
3rd Shale

Rigoth the appropriately-named bone carver is now a mother. On a separate and unrelated note, Pyromaniac has mandated the creation of a trumpet. I don't think so, sir mayor. The craftsdwarves will make whatever they damn want.

I heard... sounds today, as I was climbing the stairway to the forges. It sounded like some horrifying creatures were in pain.







Given the type of horrifying creatures we normally see here, I can only assume it's good news, and that perhaps the beasts in the caverns aren't immune to each other's poisons.



Also, I found this guy in the ocean. Seriously, this is not a way to kill a goblin. It wastes a perfectly good cage.



Failcannon and the surrounding lands have been made a county.

```
PPS: 100 (45)Pyromaniac' Kilrudlilum meets with the Siege Operator Fikod Uri
You continue to impress! I have come empowered to elevate this land in the
eyes of our realm.

a - Finish peeking in on conversation.
```

Spot the odd dwarf out.



Also, I have naught but faith in my drainage system.



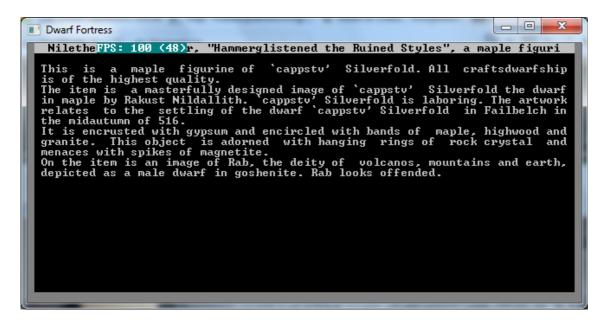
The rest of the page is illegible due to water damage

The elves arrived today, and almost immediately a woodcrafter went into a strange mood. I don't care whether we have the materials he wants or not - he's just another pair of hands anyway.

```
Rakust Nildallith, Woodcrafter has created
Nilethes Notlithtunur, a maple figurine of
'cappstu' Silverfold!

Press Enter to close window
```

So we did have everything he needed. Too bad it's useless.



I have begun destroying miscellaneous objects that serve no purpose. The first things to go are large amounts of stone as well as everything on the surface. I only hope the goblins don't show up for a while yet.

```
The Forgotten Beast Noloc Kerlebteshil has come!
An enormous blob composed of mud. It has an enormous shell and it has a bloated body. Beware its deadly dust!

Press Enter to close window
```

Oh hey, another one. Come on in, the water's *great*.

While I was reading the memo about the beast, Dariush III tapped me on the shoulder and told me that he had been elected mayor, and his first order was to ban any and all trade in electrum items. Also, Gilgameshclone is being incredibly annoying, constantly looking for something of his and yelling loudly that he can't find it every ten seconds.

```
Page 9/9 FPS: 68 (30)

Dwarf Fortress

4th Galena, 528

Item inaccessible.

'Gilgameshclone' Zulbanoggez, Dwarven Child cancels Store Owned Item:
Item inaccessible.

'Gilgameshclone' Zulbanoggez, Dwarven Child cancels Store Owned Item:
Item inaccessible.

'Gilgameshclone' Zulbanoggez, Dwarven Child cancels Store Owned Item:
Item inaccessible.

'Gilgameshclone' Zulbanoggez, Dwarven Child cancels Store Owned Item:
Item inaccessible.

Urdim Rithsazir has become a Lye Maker.

'Gilgameshclone' Zulbanoggez, Dwarven Child cancels Store Owned Item:
Item inaccessible.

'Aik' Dasnastsodel, chief medical dwarf cancels Give Food: No food available.

'Gilgameshclone' Zulbanoggez, Dwarven Child cancels Store Owned Item:
Item inaccessible.

Iton Rigothaknun Esastdegel Urist has become a Swordsdwarf.

'Gilgameshclone' Zulbanoggez, Dwarven Child cancels Store Owned Item:
Item inaccessible.

Item inaccessible.

2: Zoom to location

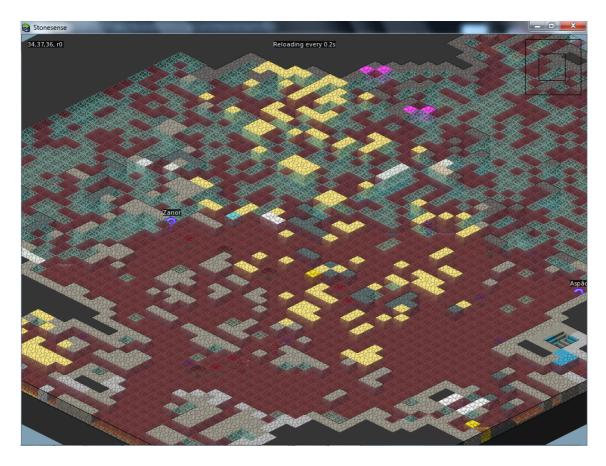
Announcement Date: 3rd Galena, 528
```

Something strange seems to be happening up on the surface. It's been raining constantly since the beginning of the year, but recently when rain hits a dwarf, the dwarf's blood shell boils away. It's been rather common since I ordered everyone to start cleaning up the surface.



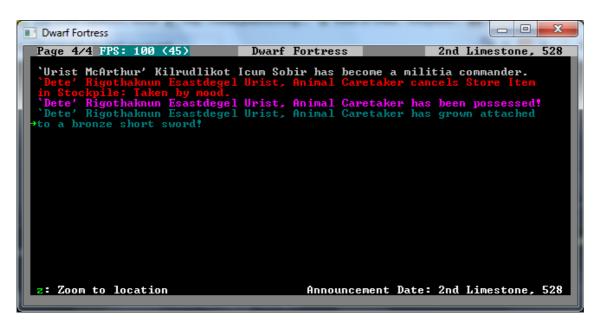
The human garbage disposals merchants have arrived. Have some stuff we don't need. Also, some migrants showed up. More garbage haulers are always needed.

Today I was presented with a painting of the cause for the otherworldly screams I heard from the caverns.



This lake is filled with a strange substance secreted by one of the beasts down there, and it seems to be rotting the flesh off its companions. The ones that have flesh, at any rate. I think it would be best to avoid that place.

Some of the idiots have been reduced to hunting vermin for food on the surface, despite the food stockpiles being both open and overflowing. Also, Glacial's ghost is up to no good again, toppling a cobaltite statue.



He's claimed a mason's workshop and is gathering materials.



MINE

In other news, we dumped about twenty bins of stuff on the human traders in exchange for food, booze, animals, metal bars, and some other heavy things so they could carry away more junk. When they left, they apparently attracted the attention of some undead horses, and one of their guards stayed behind to deal with them. I've dispatched the Chambers of Luring to assist them. Also, there are two animals for every dwarf in this fortress, and they're getting hungry too, so they're *all* going. I

just hope we can slaughter them all before they starve. Also, a caged wild horse has given birth, and two ghosts (a nameless suturer and an unperson) have been put to rest.

The dwarven caravan has arrived. Finally. Now we can get rid of more stuff. We really don't need all this junk lying oh hey there.

```
Dwarf Fortress
                                     Dwarf Fortress FPS:
                                                                  95 (48)
                                      Announcements
                                                     Reports
                                 Designations
                                                         Orders
                                 Look Around
                                                     Job List
                                Military s: Squ
Points/Routes/Notes
                                                    Squads
                                 Define
                                         Burrows
                                                                     <del>-00-00000000000-00</del>
                                     Building
                                                                     08880<u>*</u>-8-*000-
                                      Building Tasks/Prefs
Rooms/Buildings
                                              in Buildings
                                       Items
                                                     Hot
                                             Administrators
                                         this
                                   Move
                                               menu/map
                                               Options
                                          D
                                              Depot Access
                                Artifacts
                             Space: Resume .: One-Step
```

Just the one squad. They caught Mipe alone, but reinforcements arrived before they could do much to him. Dete showed up, killed the marksgoblin leader, then they ran. Siege broken.



Although apparently Mipe's luck started to run out on him.

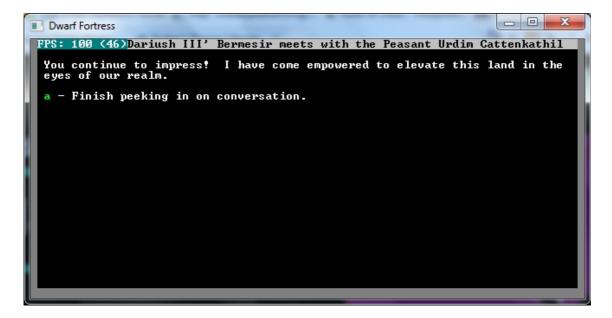
Glacial is up to more mayhem, this time with a shale armor stand.

Nothing can stop him. Not a broken foot, nor a broken ankle, nor thirst. Nothing can stop the fey weaver. He's moving toward the clothier's shop.



Fishing seems good. I wonder why the fisherdwarf says there's no fish in the ocean? Also, Xenos' ghost has been put to rest. Time flies when you're managing a fortress.

Dariush met with the liaison today.



What the hell. Failcannon and the surrounding lands have been made a duchy. Anyway, Dariush ordered steel, gold, and booze. Also, it occurs to me that I was going about the drainage problem entirely wrong - there's nowhere near enough water to even fill the excavated space, so why bother linking all the doors to a lever?

Dariush ended his ban on the electrum trade today, and ordered the creation of two electrum items. I threw a job order to make some electrum goblets on the manager's desk, so that's all taken care of.





Another one? Man, is there a party going on in the caverns, and if so, why wasn't I invited?



These bastards started wreaking havoc and were promptly ground to dust.



- ...That's nice. Now get back to bed and work on getting that foot back in working order.
- -Elth spotted some kobold thieves, nothing too worrying there.
- -WHY has this rain not stopped?
- -Attention medical staff: If your patient isn't resting, just get a hammer and whack them on the head. Not too hard, though.
- -AND FOR THE LOVE OF MAGMA, WOULD SOMEONE FIND OUT WHAT GILGAMESHCLONE IS LOOKING FOR?! He's been whining the whole damn year.

TURN 15 – LORDSLOWPOKE

A laughter, fell and terrible

The Failcannon Daily News

THIS JUST IN: EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN OF A FULLY SELF-POWERED PUMP TO CLEANSE THE OCEAN OF SLIME AND DELIVER IT TO WELLS AND AS WATER TO MUDDY FARMS FAILS SPECTACULARILY, 11 DEAD

LOWER LEVELS CURRENTLY BEING FLOODED WITH GODAWFULLY POISONOUS WATER, STATUS OF FBS UNKNOWN

OVERSEER REPORTED TO BE LAUGHING MANIACALLY

TURN 16 – TAKUANUVA

Two times

Journal of Takua Bimzasit:

I was chosen to oversee Failcannon during this year. Mayor himself told me that. It seems that it's my duty to keep us all alive, so I'l do my best.

...

I didn't noticed how chaotic Failcannon is until I became the Overseer. Stockpiles and graves are literally everywhere. I need to fix it.

...

The ocean of ooze. I need to do something with it. It's way too dangerous, and it makes a huge area inhabitable. If I remember correctly, the ooze itself makes living things rot. Quickly.

•••

I have designed some new bedrooms along with a dining hall and some stockpiles underneath.

...

Someone has left the front gate open. That's bad. We need to close It as soon as possible. Some guys went out...

...

Another forgoten beast was spoted in the caves. There are lots of them around these days.

...

Some dog, along with a cat, has died because of the infection today.

•••

Soaplope Deletholin, The Woodcutter and Amost Nomalvumom were killed by the skeletal horses. The Creative Seals were ordered to kill those horses, but they didn't managed to save these guys. Some of the Seals got hurt quite bad.

There are 50 of us left now.

•••

Iden Tenshedkel, our blacksmith, has organized a party. I think we need some rest, so he was allowed to continue.

...

I've designed a pump to elevate magma from the depths of the earth to the surface. Good news is, that we have a good spot to build it. Unfortunatelly, we need almost 90 magma-safe pumps...

...

This will be our pump's powersource. I'l hook it up to the lake in the cave above using some stairs I found that aren't connected to anything else.

...

End of Opal

Obsidian

...

Gilgameshclone seems to have lost something. Unfortunatelly, he doesn't want to tell us what it was or where could it be.

Annoying.

...

The Manager has finally started to manage our work. It has been a while.

...

I found some floors that could be smoother, and since I don't have anything else to do, I'l start working on them. Physical work should make me worry less about our certain death.

...

One of our main project, the great magma pump, isn't moving along as smoothly as planned. Miners say, that the best channel for the pump is blocked by the aquifer. We're still trying to get trough. Meanwhile, some guy called Andreus said, that the magma pump should be called "Failpump". I think it's... accurate.

...

Doren Medenkib crafts lots of exceptionally good... things. That's promising.

• • •

We kinda have a problem.





Some goblins have arrived. It seems, that they want to siege us- three big squads of goblins, and a group of trolls. Fortunatelly, Failcannon is troll-proof and completelly self-sufficient, so we don't have to worry about them. Too much.

• • •



I have found Mrbobbyg Akrulnanir sitting in the craftdwarf's workshop. After I asked him what is he doing, he replied:

- -Yarn.
- -What?
- -Yarn. Give me yarn. I need it.
- -But... I think we never had any.
- -WHAT DO YOU MEAN?! I NEED YARN! DID YOU UNDERSTAND?! GIVE ME YARN!!!

IT turns out, that he was sitting there for a while. Long while. At least a month.

I know what happens to dwarfs who act like that. If they can't finish whathever they're doing... They end up insane.

I have ordered that room to be cut off immediatelly. We can't save him, but he can be dangerous. I won't take that risk.

...



Turns out I made the right choice.

...

It has started raining.

I hate when it rains so much.

...

We have finally managed to get the Failpump's channel around the aquifer. It should be easy now to dig the rest.

...

End of Obsidian.

Granite:

...

→The Warthog (Tame) has died of old age

A warthog managed to die because of the old age.

In Failcannon.

Quite an achievement.

. . .

It stopped raining. It will start agian preety soon.

..

breadbocks Shedimudib Woodcutter has given birth to a girl

My wife, Breadbocks, gave birth to a girl.

We named her Ustuth.

. . .

Almost everything Tupu creates is a true masterpiece. We have piles of them already...

...

It rains again. How unexpected.

...

Slate:

...

I have ordered some giant iron corkscrews and pipes made. We will need lots of iron for them, so I'm looking for some ores we can dig out...



Another forgoten beast was spotted in the Ocean Of Ooze.

If they want to rot so much, then why should we interrupt them...

...

Mrbobbyg, the dwarf I ordered to wall of, has died from the thirst. There was no other way. I had to protect the fort.

I had to.

...

Someone told me, that a warthog starved to death.

I ignored him. It was propably outside, so we shouldn't bother.

...

That's strange... I was told that another warthog has starved.

...

I∏Tupu⊠ Ostral has claimed a Carpenter™s Workshop∭

Tupu has taken over one of our carpenter's workshops.

I expect him to make something even better than anything he made before.

. . .

Another warthog starved.

Why? Why no one feeds them?

•••



As expected, Tupu created another great craft.

And it's relatively usefull.

...

Let me guess... another warthog starved?

This starts to be annoying...

...

Felsite:

• • •

Dariush III Bermesir mayor has ended a mandate

Dariush III has ended his mandate.

I have honestly no idea what was it about.

...

Warthogs keep starving.

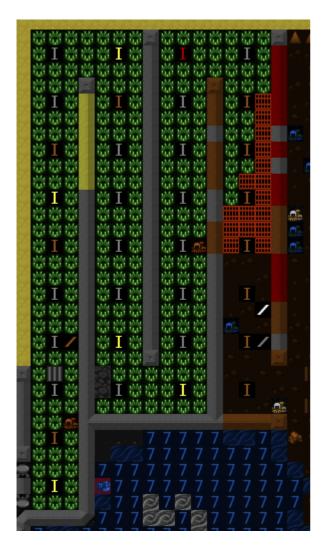
I don't care about them anymore.

• • •

Gilgameshclone keeps looking for the thing he lost months ago.

I hope he will find it soon, and get back to work.

...



Looks like some trolls got trapped in our cage traps.

Awesome.

Also, it iseems that goblins have left us. They won't be missed.

...

Looks like some trolls got trapped in our cage traps.

Awesome.

Also, it iseems that goblins have left us. They won't be missed.

•••



I decided, that we should get those gold bars that were left outside. Siege has just passed, goblins shouldn't return for a long time.

...

An Elven caravan has arrived. I have ordered to open the north gate for them.

...

Rakust Rodimaloth is dead.

Right after we lowered the bridge, some goblins were spoted.

A vile force of darkness has arrived!

Quite a lot of them, actually.

They were trying to siege us once again. I would rise the bridge immediately, but some guys were outside. I have ordered them to return at once.

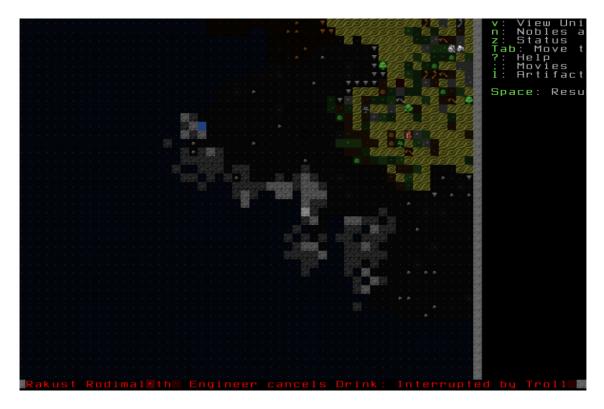
I was waiting as long as I could. Everyone made it safely inside.

Rakust Rodimaløth: Engineer cancels Drink: Interrupted by Goblin Axeman

Except for Rakust.

She got scared by goblins and started to run away. Since goblins were already too close, we had to raise the bridge.



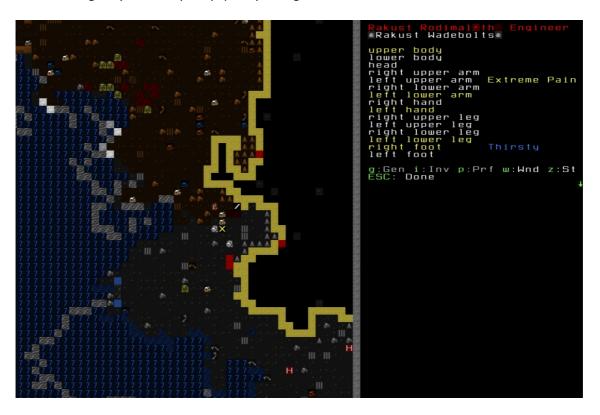


A group of goblins and trolls started to chase her. Then, for some reason, only one troll was chasing her.

```
The Engineer attacks The Troll but She jumps away!
The Troll attacks The Engineer but She jumps away!
The Troll attacks The Engineer but She jumps away!
The Troll charges at The Engineer to right foot with her right horn.
The Troll collides with The Engineer!
The Engineer is Knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Engineer is Knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Troll releases the grip of The Troll's left lower arm on The
Engineer's upper front toth
The Engineer stands upper front toth
The Troll charges at The Engineer!
The Troll darges at The Engineer but the right lower arm with her right hand!
The Troll grapes The Engineer in the left lower leg with her left tusk.
The Troll grapes the Engineer in the left lower leg with her left tusk.
The Troll grapes the Engineer by the second finger right hand with her left lower arm on The
Engineer is knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Troll releases the grip of The Troll's left lower arm on The
Engineer is no longer stuneed.
The Incollege with the Knowledge stands up
The Engineer is no longer stuneed.
The Incollege with the Engineer by the right upper leg with her right upper
The Engineer is no longer stuneed.
The Troll charges at The Engineer in the upper body with her left hand
brown and the muscle and Brown and tumbles backward!
The Engineer is knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Troll collides with The Engineer!
The Troll collides with The Engineer!
The Troll charges at The Engineer by the right lower arm on The
Engineer's knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Tr
```

```
→The Engineer stands up.
The Troll charges at The Engineer!
The Troll Lye Maker gores The Engineer in the left lower arm with her left tusk. bruising the muscle through the x(giant cave swallow leather Cloak)x!
The Troll collides with The Engineer!
The Engineer is knocked over!
The Engineer is knocked over!
The Troll Lye Maker locks The Engineer's right wrist with The Troll Lye
Maker's right upper arm!
The Troll Lye Maker bends The Engineer's right hand with The Troll Lye
Maker's right upper arm!
Higament in the right wrist has been torn and a tendon has been torn!
The Troll Lye Maker releases the joint lock of The Troll Lye Maker's
right upper arm on The Engineer's right hand.
The Troll Lye Maker releases the grip of The Troll Lye Maker's right
Upper arm on The Engineer's right hand.
The Engineer stands up.
```

She was caught by the troll pretty quickly. She got hurt a lot, and then...



The troll didn't killed her.

It just stoped attacking her and started to walk away.

Even though Rakust's ankle was clearly broken, she managed to stand up. We opened the east gate so she could return.



And then, she got surrounded by trolls.

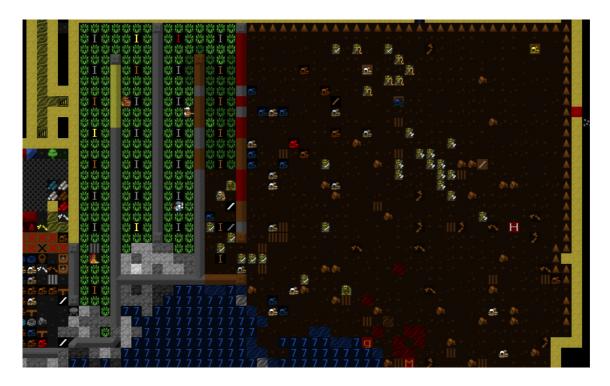
```
Rakust Rodimaløth
*Rakust Wadebolts*
         body
                          Unconscious
upper
         bodý
                          Stunned
lower
                          Winded
head
right upper arı
left upper arm
                   arm
                          Extreme Pain
right lower
left lower a
                   arm
                  arm
right hand
left
        hand
right upper leg
left upper leg
right lower leg
left lower leg
                          Thirsty
left
        foot
         shoulder
houlder
elbow
wrist
rist
neck
upper spine
```

Rakust Rodimaløth Engineer has been struck down 🏬

```
Rakust Rodimal the shead Muddy shale A spattering of dwarf blood A dusting of mud
```

She was killed almost instantly.

•••



Since we opened the east gate, goblins started to run towards our fortress.



Right trough the cage traps.
Almost all of them got traped, rest of them ran away.
What should I do with all of these goblins?

Summer has come. It should stop raining now. I hope.

Meanwhile

"Hey, overseer! Sir!"

"Yes?" The other dwarf replied.

"You were asking what to do with the goblins right, sir?" The dwarf spoke with a smile in his face.

"That's correct, some of our people told me we should throw then in a pit filled with magma. Do you disagree with the magma method of execution our ancestors have used for so long?"

"Not exactaly, sir. The magma is pretty damn useful, for killing and curing illness as some of our own would say. But... Why not throw the goblins in a pit full of me, with a me full of steel armor and a pretty new shiny silver mace?"

"Huum... Do you claim yourself more effective than magma?"

"Not at all sir, but i'm sure as hell I'm going to be more slowly hurtfull!"

"Huum. I'll think about it... What's your name, dwarf?"

Unlike the rest of the conversation, as the dwarf answered the question he seemed rather pale, different from the cheerful red looks he possessed before. Yet, his answer was... "Elderont."

Journal of Takua Bimzasit:

Hematite:

...

I have started to improve Failcannon's walls (it will get usefull after getting lava on the surface). Dwarfs are still retrieving caged prisoners, so it can take a while.

The Forgotten Beast Box has come! A great scalu theropod. It has a pair of squat antennae and it squirms and fidgets. Its black scales are jagged and close—set. Beware its poisonous bite!

Press Enter to close window

Another beast. Where do they come from? And why every single one of them is poisonous?

•••

Malachite:

...

We didn't reloaded all of the cage traps yet. We don't have enough space for all of the prisoners, se we started to store them at our graveyards (no, we didn't killed them, they just sit in their cages next to some coffins).

...



This is impossible.

I just saw some horses. Non-undead, non-tamed, just a bunch of horses.

First living wild animals I have seen in years.

...

I had a conversation with Uristein Bekarkadol today.

He was made responsible for job coordination at the Failpump. He says he's a scientist (he says it's !! Scientist!!, but I have no idea what could that mean), so he should be able to manage such project.

- -I have some bad news.-said Uristein
- -What bad news?
- -It seems, that we're running out of wood.
- -Yeah. And?
- -We need wood to finish the Failpump.
- -Why? We can get power to the pumps using gears.
- -I'm not talking about axles. I'm talking about water wheels.
- -What water wheels?
- -The ones in the reactor. When it comes to the water wheels, wood is the only choice.
- -The reactor... I completely forgot about it. Hmm... I know where we can find some wood.

...

We're going to break to one of the caverns. If I remember correctly, there are few beasts in there. Let's train some more military.

•••

Some migrants have arrived

10 migrants arrived today. They should make things quicker.

...

Galena:

...

A human caravan from Gil Thinir has arrived

A human caravan has arrived. They have managed to get inside without getting killed by the zombie horses.

...

Limestone:

• • •

Kadol Godenobur Miner has been possessed!

Kadol has claimed a mason's workshop. I hope he will give us something usefull.

Kadol Godenobur Miner has created Lathonn las Edancomn*th a tetrahedrite table!

Press Enter to close window

This is a tetrahedrite table All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encircled with bands of slate On the item is an image of a four-pointed star in tetrahedrite. On the item is an image of the Bent Vessel the magnetite floodgate in slate.

A table? Good enough.

...

Sandstone:

. . .

Some migrants have arrived

Another wave of migrants arrived today. 8 of them this time.

...

Timber:

...

```
The Forgotten Beast Derku has come! A gigantic eyeless serpent. It has a spiral shell and it appears to be emaciated. Its amber scales are large and set far apart. Beware its deadly blood!

Press Enter to close window
```

Another forgoten beast. We have like 151 of them now.

...

🖪 A caravan from Dastot Cog has arrived 🖫

A caravan from the Queen has arrived.

I told one of the merchants to give her a letter from me.

"From the Failcannon's Overseer

Dear Queen Led

You will be happy to know that we're still alive. It's even better than that- this place is a true paradise. Getting here was the best idea we ever had.

A lot of goblins arrived lately. We told them where you live, so you can meet them in person. They have one of the best crossbow bolts we ever saw. They said they have lots of them and they will give you some of them as a gift.

We have lots of gold around here. Since everyone wants to trade with us, we have every luxury you can imagine. Some of the traders said, that they will tell others how great this place is.

I hope you're in good health The Failcannon's Overseer."

...

Moonstone:

...

Nothing interesting happened this month.

...

Opal:

...

→ Darvie Ed≝mzes Miller has died after colliding with an obstacle

- -Uristein?
- -Yes?
- -Can you tell me why do we have a dead dwarf at the bottom of failpump's shaft?
- -Well... I told him to dig it out. So he did. He dug out th ebottom half. Then, he started to dig towards it from the above.
- -He what?
- -I told him it's a bad idea to do so.
- -Well, at least his death will be an example for the others...

A dwarf has arrived.

- -We have some miners at the hospital. They say they dug out the bottom of the Failpump's shaft, and then...
- -You can't be serious...

...

Obsidian:

...

Uristein calculated, that our reactor won't be able to power all of the pumps. I have ordered him to designate some additional space for the pumps.

```
The Forgotten Beast Isa Aditha Lerine has come!
An enormous feathered crab. It has a pair of long antennae and it undulates rhythmically. Its pumpkin feathers are long and sparse. Beware its poisonous bite!

Press Enter to close window

The Forgotten Beast Al% Issok Siga has come! A great three-eyed hadrosaurid. It has large mandibles and it has a gaunt appearance. Its golden yellow scales are jagged and overlapping. Reware its poisonous sting!

Press Enter to close window.
```

Another two beasts... seriously, we need to get rid of them.

...

A vile force of darkness has arrived!

Goblins!





Fortunatelly, they don't learn on their mistakes.

More prisoners? Great.

...

I had a... strange conversation today.

Mayor called me to his office.

- -Is it ready yet?- he asked.
- -What is ready yet?
- -The Failpump. Can it work yet?
- -Of course not. It's far from being finished.
- -Then you will be an Overseer for another year.
- -What? Why?
- -You said you're the only one who knows how to make it work.
- -Yes, but...
- -I made my decision then.

It seems, that i'm stuck at this job for a year more.

Just great...

...

Granite:

...

Turns out Failcannon is running out of alcohol. I have no idea why, but I'm going to ask a few guys, someone should know something.

•••

It seems that there are only 3 small farms in here, and there are almost no dwarfs working there. It is propably caused by the dwarfs having almost random tasks. Dividing all dwarfs into few large groups with differnt groups of jobs should help a bit.

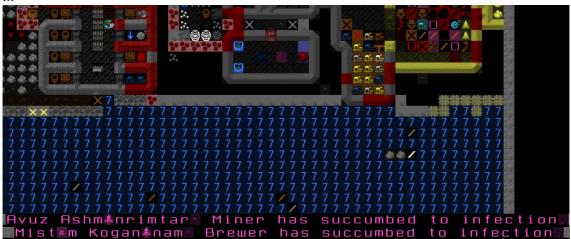
...

We need some more farms, but I don't know where to build them yet..

...

Slate:

New dwarfs arrived today. I don't know if it's good or bad in this situation.



Two miners that were diging the channels at the Failpump and fell few floors down because they were digging directly downwards have died because of the infection. This means 2 things:

- 1) They won't dig downwards anymore.
- 2) We need soap.

📗 Filthywalrus 🥙 Sibrekurdim 🏲 Brewer has gone berserk!

Since we have no yarn, Filthywalrus went berserk. He was quickly killed by the military and caused no damage.

...

Felsite:

An elven caravan has arrived. They had no yarn.

Failpump's reactor is a bit tricky when it gets to stopping it. The easiest way to do so is by draining it. Which means that the water needs to get somewhere else. Fortunatelly, there is a staircase leading to the Ocean of Ooze, close enough to the reactor. Unfortunatelly, one of the beasts from the Ocean has climbed on the staircase and since it was in contact with the ooze it's pretty rotten. I've ordered the military to wait outside the tunnel and told one of the miners to dig trough the wall between the drainage tunnel and the staircase.



That was a quite short fight. As soon as the wall was digged trough, the beast has entered the drainage tunnel. So did the military. But, since the beast was pretty rotten, they were all fighting surrounded by the miasma so dense that no one was able to see anything. After a few minutes dwarfs left the miasma-filled tunnel. I've ordered a wall to be built in there, so no beasts will ever get trough.

...

Hematite:

...

Since our walls aren't magma-safe yet, I have ordered the dwarfs to make them higher. It should also help our defences a bit.

...

Malachite:

...

Cheese Adilishen Zonliruksil Umar Metalsmith cancels Store Item in Stockpile: Taken by mood → Cheese Adilishen Zonliruksil Umar Metalsmith withdraws from society

Cheese is acting strange. He stopped talking at all and sits in the forge drawing pictures of stuff. I hope he will make something usefull from these things.

•••

New migrants arried. More hands to work are apreciated.

...

Galena:

...

```
Cheese Adilishen Zonliruksil Umar Metalsmith
has created M°zireral Urdim Ar°sh a gold low
boot!
Press Enter to close window
```

A boot? You've made a single boot? Okay...

Another goblin army got caught in our traps. I have no idea what to do with them.

...

Limestone:

...

I hava a plan to get some wood from one of the caves. I'm currently preparing a room for the wood to be stored.

...

Sandstone:

...

More dwarfs. We need a big farm if we don't want to starve.

The Forgotten Beast Migrur Meshosakmam has come!
A gigantic feathered mite. It has wings and it belches and croaks. Its periwinkle feathers are long and sparse. Beware its deadly spittle!

Press Enter to close window

Another beast. Why do they even come here?

...

Sodel Nilardes Dwarven Child withdraws from society

Some child stopped talking and draws pictures of things. We're going to get a new useless piece of junk.





One of the Forgoten Beasts, Migur, got inside our fortress. Seals killed it, but I have no idea how did he got inside.

...

Turns out the child that started drawing stuff wants some yarn. Since I never saw a piece of yarn cloth in this fort, I don't think he will stay sane for too long.

...

Timber:

• • •



A group of zombie buzzards has arrived to the Failcannon. Since they made everyone stop working and run away from them, I've ordered military to shoot them down immediatelly.

. . .

2 snatchers got caught in our traps. I hope this don't mean another siege will be soon.

•••

A caravan from Dastot Cog has arrived. We're opening the gates for them.

• • •

Merchants died in the ambush, as well as some of the dwarfs I've sent to rescue them. I hate goblins.

...

Moonstone:

... →Sodel Nilardes Dwarven Child is stricken by melancholy!

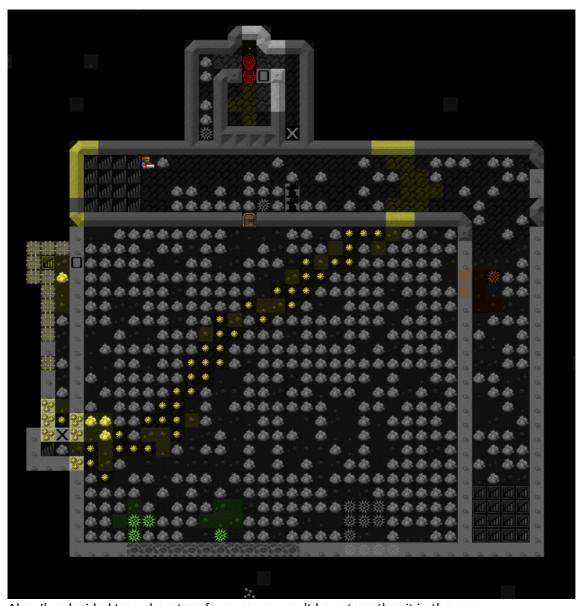
The silent child has went crazy. Fortunatelly, he just started to walk slowly around.

...

Opal:



The farm I've designed few months ago is finally done, so we won't starve to death. Yet.



Also, I've decided to make a tree farm, so we won't have to gather it in the caves.

•••

Obsidian:

...

Sodel Nilardes Dwarven Child has died from thirst The silent child who went crazy has died from thirst. He will be missed.

...

TURN 17 – ANDREUS

^11

* * *

Urist Imkinorris: ANDREUS! I SUMMON THEE!!!

Andreus: WHO DARES?

* * *

Journal of Andreus the Endless One (10th Aluonra Incarnation)

1st Granite, 532

So it has come to this.

A new year is upon us, and when finally confronted with the question of who, indeed, would dare to take the position of mayor, we were presented with one single, simple answer. No-one. No-one had the spine take the reigns of this monstrous place, so deeply loathed by all things that even Hell itself recoils from us. Between this blighted beach and blighted coast we stand, utterly accursed. Beneath us, hell. Above us, stars and gods, dying. Around us, dank water, goblins and ambulatory cattle corpses. Before us, Queen Led Uthmikmebzuth, the Genocidally Insane. After us, nothing.

My own functional immortality may be coming to an end, as all things converge to the vanishing point of oblivion.

Oh, to hell with it. I'll be mayor. It's not like there's anything I could possibly lose at this point.

2nd Granite, 532

First things first: I have been contemplating my past lives - the ones that occured before I arrived in this accursed world - and I have not had much attention left for this place. It seems I must sift through the vast, untidy mess of notes the previous overseers left behind, and observe the unfinished plans and projects that they have littered this fortress with.

I have no idea where anything is. I have no idea what anything does. This is not merely a madhouse designed by a madman, but a madhouse designed by *many* madmen, each with an intense hatred for the previous madman's unique flavour of madness. I have found evidence of what appears to be some effort to reproduce the Eternity Engine from Battlefailed (whose wheels, bizarrely, I have heard turning in my dreams as of late) on a much larger scale.



Besides me, there are eighty dwarves clinging to life in Failcannon. Nine are children. This means there are seventy-two able-bodied dwarves in Failcannon. The militia numbers thirty dwarves across three squads. According to our most recent stocklists, food and drink do not seem to be a pressing

concern, even though I can't seem to work out where either the farms or the breweries are. I don't understand what anything is, what anything does, or what the hell this even is:



I have no idea what to do. This is a new sensation.

What I'm going to do for now is let everything that doesn't require active planning (i.e. whatever monstrous catacomb was planned by the previous overseer) work itself out while I search the uncountable aeons of knowledge I have accumulated for an answer as to what the bleeding fuck I should do next.

9th Granite

```
'Aik' Dasnastsodel has begun a mysterious construction!

(raw green glass)
(raw green glass)

goblin-cap logs

gypsum blocks

light yellow diamonds

gabbro

lead bars

gabbro

silver bars
```

possessed metalsmith, Aik, finally found all the materials he needed for whatever it was that he's trying to make, and he's now started work on it...

10th Granite

```
'Aik' Dasnastsodel, Metalsmith has created Gorroth Datan, a green glass trumpet!

Press Enter to close window
```

... and finished it.

Gorroth Datan, "The Disemboweler of Iron", a green glass trumpet This is a green glass trumpet. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encrusted with gabbro, studded with lead and encircled with bands of green glass, light yellow diamond, gabbro and silver. This object menaces with spikes of green glass and gypsum. On the item is an image of Otik the Blueness of Flickers, the deity of games and the dawn, depicted as a male dwarf in goblin-cap. Otik the Blueness of Flickers is laughing.

It's a glass trumpet. Not really much I can say about it. I mean, it's very pretty and all, but I would have prefered a powerful weapon or some form of arcane focus that I could use to flee this world for good. It's not like he'll even let anyone play the damn thing, it's so fragile. Yet another bauble on the increasingly large list of pointless junk that people will inevitably try to rain the fortress to obtain.

17th Slate, 532

Some migrants have arrived. Poor fools.

I can't find the lever that opens the gate. I'm not even entirely sure where exactly the gate is.

They're going to starve to death. Kind of ironic, really. Queen Led's plan is working - dwarves turn up here, and then they die.

19th Slate, 532

Oh, no, wait, they're not going to starve to death. They're going to be eviscerated by the local wilddeath.

25th Slate, 532

After days of fruitless searching, I was finally able to locate the set of levers that operate the drawbridges. I have placed an overseer's bookmark in the relevant location, so that future overseers (if this place survives another year) will know where to find them. I have sent the militia out to scour the land of wilddeath for the time being. We managed to get our migrants inside, with only one dwarf sustaining any major injuries: Cog Rovodesis, a spinner, was severely wounded during an ambush by two skorses. Both his hands and his right foot are broken and will require the services of the fortress medical staff.

3rd Felsite, 532

My new office and dining room are complete. What can I say? I feel the weight of onrushing doom weighing heavily upon me. If these are the last days of my aeons-long life - and the last days of all things, in all worlds - then I'd like to at least spend them in relative comfort.

10th Felsite, 532

'Neotemplar' Obokmìshos, Mason has died from thirst.

Neotemplar has inexplicably died of thirst just above the Eternity Engine chamber. I have absolutely no idea what he was doing there or why he could not avail himself of our massive supply of alcohol.

15th Felsite, 532

Two things of note occured today:

A elven caravan from Fisomawada has arrived.
Doren Medenkib, Brewer has been possessed!

NO WAIT, MAKE THAT THREE THINGS:

A vile force of darkness has arrived!

Well, looks like those elves are screwed. Better line up all three militia squads and get some killing done.

22nd Felsite, 532

```
Doren Medenkib has begun a mysterious construction!

garnierite

Zombie Groundhog bone [4]

cow leather

pig tail fiber cloth

rough tanzanites

(maple logs)

cave spider silk cloth

Stray Horse Foal bone [13]
```

23rd Felsite, 532

Doren Medenkib, Brewer has created Irtireser Lirukashzos, a garnierite table!

Press Enter to close window

I Dwarf Fortress

Irtireser Lirukashzos, "Dangleglitters the Violent Distraction", a garnier

This is a garnierite table. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is decorated with cow leather and maple and encircled with bands of groundhog bone and pig tail fiber. This object menaces with spikes of tanzanite and cave spider silk.

On the item is an image of Nithari Pantedtwigs the Tumors of Dawning the ocean titan in garnierite. Nithari Pantedtwigs the Tumors of Dawning is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the ocean titan Nithari Pantedtwigs the Iumors of Dawning in The Blueness of Malodors in a time before time.

On the item is an image of Kigok Pokercooks, the deity of loyalty, oaths, marriage, family and pregnancy, depicted as a female dwarf in horse bone. Kigok Pokercooks is in a fetal position.

Human caravan from Gil Thinir arrived.

The merchants need a trade depot to unload their goods.

A vile force of darkness has arrived!

Human caravan from Gil Thinir no longer requires a trade depot to unload their goods.

14th Opal, 532

Sibrek Thortithmosus, bookkeeper is taken by a fey mood!

20th Opal, 532

```
lignite TSK
garnierite TSK
rough cat's eyes TSK
cow leather TSK
Erib Adilrulush's bone [4TSK
(milk quartzes) TSK
silver bars
silver bars
*pig tail fiber cloth*
```

24th Opal, 532

```
Sibrek Thortithmosus, bookkeeper has created Sibrek Thortithmosus, a lignite grate!

Press Enter to close window
```

So the dwarves have taken to naming artifacts after themeselves now. Interesting. But more interesting however...

```
Sibrek Thortithmosus, "Sibrek Spellroom", a lignite grate

This is a lignite grate. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encircled with bands of lignite, garnierite, dog bone, silver and pig tail fiber. This object menaces with spikes of cat's eye and cow leather. On the item is an image of Lur Thiefwitch, the deity of jealousy, depicted as a male dwarf in milk quartz. Lur Thiefwitch looks dejected. On the item is an image of two mountains in silver.
```

This grate depicts Lur Thiefwitch. Most interesting. Most interesting indeed.

1st Granite, 533

I've realised something.

I think I should have realised it at lot sooner.

Each of us, dwarves, elves, humans, even goblins, we are individuals. We have our own preferred hairstyles, preferences for colours and materials, dreams and desires, hopes and fears. We have our own aptitudes, our own talents, our own skills. And yet, none of that matters, in the grand scheme of things, until we come to places like this. In the Mountainhomes, we sleepwalk through life waiting to be sent to somewhere like this. None of what we are truly matters until it is tested. We are brought to this place, sometimes kicking and screaming, and yet we never truly come alive until we are here.

Across the ages, I've lived as many, many dwarves, but also humans, elves, goblins - even great creatures with the heads of wolves in a few universes. I've lived and died a thousand times, but I've never realised this one truth.

These places, these monuments of hardship, suffering and sacrifice - they are not a curse. They are a gift. Because only in surviving in them do we learn who we truly are.

I am at peace.

TURN 18 – SETHCREYID

Mortuary

Meanwhile

Urist McMiner: This adamantine is there for a reason!

Arvada: Shut up and dig. Urist McMiner: But...

Arvada: I told you to shut up. Don't worry. There are no demons down there.

Urist McMiner: What demons? No one said anthing about any...

Arvada: Listen: adamantine veins aren't tunnels leading straight to hell, that just wait for someone stupid enough to dig there, so they can unleash infinite hordes of near-immortal demonic entities

upon any fortress within a hundread miles radius. That would be the dumbest thing ever.

Urist McMiner: Oh. I guess you're right. Silly me. Let me get my pick..

The goings of the gods

The child god Thoth lay deep in thought, back against the tree with a conjured cloak wrapped around him to block out the cold. Though no normal earthly element could give any deity pause, a deep and evil wind now coursed through all realities, and even this secret place could not avoid them. Enshrouded in the mist before him floated the great Seeing Eye, an item Thoth had none-too-gently coerced into a wider, more blood-shot gaze some time ago. It had seemed to him that one shouldn't be able to see wider than infinitely into infinity, but that was before he did so.

He couldn't forget what he saw, but was nonetheless able to sew the eyelids together using a few conjured strands of metal with his own eyes shut, through divine sense of sound. Still, the visions plagued his memory, spreading throughout like hatching brood of mnemonic spiders. His paranoia hit a breakthrough by the sudden telltale pulse of a wormhole invading his world, but a radiating calmness hit him almost as quickly. The Goddess Kigok Pokercook had come to visit, and she hurried into a briefing.

The worlds are falling closer together," she said, crossing the grass toward him. "The Shadow is everywhere. "Few worlds remain where the nighttime is not theirs. Ura still holds command of the

Sanctum."

"I know." Thoth stared dully at the ground. "Soon gods will position for whatever scraps of power Ura will allow and we'll all be bartering with mortals, if we survive."

Kigok regarded the godling. "You're growing up fast," she said.

"Fast enough to know when I'm being patronized." Thoth glared at the mystical eyeball he'd inherited. "That's why you gave me this crummy job, isn't it? Stare at the mortals, Thoth, and never lift a finger to help! Well, I know more than you think, and I think more than I used to."

Kigok looked off at a tree in the distance. "You are doing your job exactly as expected. I'm aware that you assassinated that mortal several years ago." Thoth betrayed his surprise, but Kigok was smiling. "The Watcher of Worlds is expected to break the Rules every now and again," she whispered. "This is why we allowed Lur's treachery for as long as we did. You need to know exactly what to do and when to do it."

Thoth gave a hard look at the eyeball, then back at Kigok. "Do you know what happens when Failcannon crumbles?" The godling waved his hands in an arc. "Nothing. There will be nothing left. We may all vanish."

"But here we still are." The goddess looked around. "There is still hope."

"Not for long." Thoth sullenly returned his gaze to the ground. "Lur is about to be roasted alive by an elf. If he dies before reaching Failcannon, we're finished."

"Lur Thiefwitch is about to arrive right on time," Kigok said. "You should pay closer attention to things going on!"

"What?" Thoth reached for the eyeball, but found it already floating up to his face. "You mean the Sorcerer's gambit? That will never work, the ritual is a dud."

"See for yourself," Kigok winked before disappearing in a rainbow cloud of flowers and butterflies. Her voiced lingered on. "The rules are always changing."

Into the mist of time and space the Watcher peered...

This is a bronze chain. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is studded with bronze.

"The moon will be reaching its apex in thirty seconds!" Glacial yelled from beyond the small room in which Andreus was waiting. Fixed on the floor was a thick, shining chain engraved with a series of shifting runes. A few specks of blood and other less identifiable substances were spattered across the floor.

"This is it," the Magister rubbed his hands together. "This is the last idea I've got, and if it doesn't work I intend to just finish the weapon and call it a lifetime."

"I wanted to ask you about that!" Glacial called out. "There's what, fifty reactors down there, how the hell are they supposed-"

"Not now!" Andreus shouted back. "Time to apex?"

A moment, then: "Eleven seconds!"

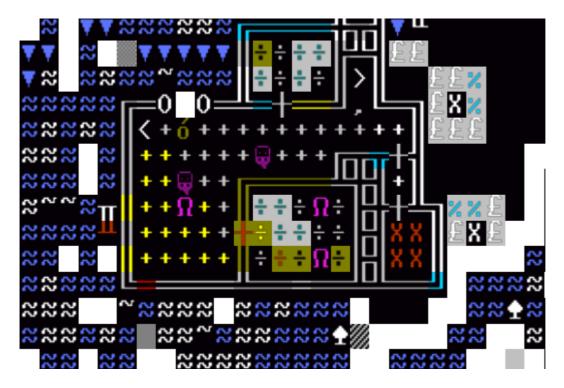
"On my mark!" Andreus cried. "Five... four..."

Glacial threw the lever at Andreus' command. The entire room lit up with a golden glow that nearly blinded the Magister, who fell to his back, feeling sick. Resisting the urge to vomit, he peered up into the fading glow and saw a naked old dwarf now shackled to the glistening chain.

"Lur?" he ventured. "Lur Thiefwitch?"

There was no response from the dwarf, who looked unconscious. Andreus approached and reached for a flask of sunshine at his side poured it into the dwarf's mouth. Glacial entered the room and peered back and forth between them. "Did it work?" he said.

The dwarf opened his eyes. "Where am I?" he rasped.



"Lur, is that you?" Andreus stepped back.

The dwarf looked at them, nodding slightly. "Who are you?" he asked. He scanned the room. "Where am I? Where is the elf?"

"There is no elf," Andreus said. "You are in Failcannon. We've called you here because--"

"Failcannon!" the dwarf looked amazed. "Quickly, miss. You must bring me to Andreus! Or whatever he calls himself now!"

"This is Andreus!" Glacial beamed proudly, pointing at his mentor. The Magister's smile froze into pace.

Lur looked confused. "No, Andreus is..." Lur stared ahead, realization taking form on his features.

"Hello, Lur."

"You!" Lur cried suddenly. "This is all your fault!"

"My fault!" Andreus crossed his arms. "How can any of this be my fault?"

"You've been displacing souls, you lunatic!" Lur rolled to the floor, still enchained, and started inching across the floor toward the Magister.

"The chain appears to have bound your power," Andreus contemplated, "since you haven't pulled the worm-on-a-hook trick yet."

"I don't have any power to begin with, dolt! And it's your fault! So let me out of these chains so I can strangle you with them."

"You have no powers?" Andreus rubbed his chin. "How did this come to be?" Glacial rolled Lur onto his back and started unfastening the chains. "What are you doing?" he asked his apprentice.

"You can't treat a God like this," Glacial said. "Sorry, sir."

"Atta boy, lad!" Lur grinned malevolently at Andreus. "I'm sorry about having to kill your friend here and all."

"Wait a minute!" Andreus held up a hand. "Can't killing me wait? We're facing a problem of some magnitude here. I need information, and you need some booze, if I'm right."

Lur stood up and let the chains clatter to the floor. "All right then, lets have a few words. Just words for now. And more of that flask, if you will."

Andreus tossed him the sunshine and called out to Glacial, "Bring clothes!" The Magister stepped across the room to a table and lifted a stack of notes

"Not like it all matters." Lur emptied the flask into his throat and threw it to the floor. "I kill you, you get some other body and we're all doomed anyway."

"About that. I've heard the astral talk," hissed Andreus. "I refuse to accept that the body-switching technique I've used for thousands of years has suddenly inspired the death of reality. What's really going on? Why are you here? Why are you... wrinkled?"

Lur sighed. He was mortal now. Unbound by any cosmic law, he was free to share what he knew, and he knew he needed the Sorcerer's help.

"Do you remember the book you had found, the first time you died? Yes, of course you do. Taught you some new tricks, eh? Well, it brought Death into the realm of mortals. Some of the gods wanted your soul destroyed. Others vowed to protect you, saying you were innocent. It was quite a scene. You were sent back before the argument swelled, and so Ura's secrets spilled into the world, and that meant the world was hers to roam, unbound by the edicts of non-interference. But it didn't stop there, with one world. There were so many worlds, Sorcerer, so many you carried the secret into, that Ura's domain grew too vast. And in every world, she conspired with the forces of the Shadow to stretch her reach even further."

Lur sighed. "But then you came to Battlefailed with that ill-fated court servant, because you had

been here before, was that it? This is where you landed in Aluonra, and the local undeath fascinated you so. But this is the place where Death entered into this world, and she has closed shut her gates. Every dwarf that dies here - or is displaced by magic - their soul is at the mercy of the shadows all around. And Ura gets stronger. The Queen Led worships her, you know. Why do you think she is sending dwarves here? Why do you think Fetus Smashing Day exists? The Philosophers were coming close to the truth, so she had them executed. She is feeding her Goddess and building an army.

"There are now creatures of the night invading nearly every world, and judging by the look of the sky, the displaced souls will soon run out of places to go. Ghosts will wander the world and corpses will soon start to walk. And soon Aluonra blinks out of existence. So there you have it. By allowing you back to life I thought to prevent civil war, but it seems to have only delayed it. When the gods go to battle, this will be the first place destroyed. There will be no new bodies to jump to, not dwarf, human or beast. And since I'm a mortal now, we can get to the dying together."

Andreus broke the silence that followed after a minute. "What can we do to prevent this? The world's existed too long to stop now."

"I can't remember."

The Magister frowned. "You can't remember what?"

"I know I had to reach Failcannon," Lur frowned. "But for what reason..."

Andreus looked up at the ceiling. "Have you seen the stars lately?" he asked.

"The stars are just faraway worlds," Lur said. "They're so far away that we only see what they looked like a long time ago. If the stars are going out, it means something is standing in their way."

Andreus looked puzzled. "Something is blocking the stars from the sky?"

"You don't want to know what."

There was a rumbling in the room next to them. "Do you hear something?" Andreus asked.

```
the Forgotten Beast Båx is fighting!
the Endless One 'Andreus X' Gansåkzul is
```

The door to the room burst open and a towering two-legged lizard stomped inside, immediately grabbed Andreus, and savaged him mercilessly.

```
The Forgotten Beast grabs The Endless One by the XX(pig tail fiber trousers)XX with its left upper arm?

The Endless One is unable to break the grip of The Forgotten Beast's left upper arm on The Endless One's XX(pig tail fiber trousers)XX?

The Forgotten Beast releases the grip of The Forgotten Beast's left upper arm on The Endless One's XX(pig tail fiber trousers)XX.

The Forgotten Beast punches The Endless One in the right upper leg with its right hand, bruising the muscle through the (giant mole leather trousers)?

The Forgotten Beast kicks The Endless One in the upper body with its right foot, bruising the muscle and bruising the right lung through the XX(pig tail fiber cloak)XX?

The Forgotten Beast kicks The Endless One in the left upper leg with its right foot, shattering the bone through the (giant mole leather trousers)?

The Endless One stands up.

The Forgotten Beast charges at The Endless One!

The Forgotten Beast scratches The Endless One in the upper body, tearing apart the muscle and tearing apart the upper spine's nervous tissue through the XX(pig tail fiber cloak)XX!
```

When the beast had finished beating the Sorcerer's lifeless body, it turned its predatory gaze on Lur.

```
The Forgotten Beast grabs The Fallen God by the right lower arm with its left lower arm!

The Forgotten Beast locks The Fallen God's right elbow with The Forgotten Beast's left lower arm!

The Fallen God is unable to break the grip of The Forgotten Beast's left lower arm on The Fallen God's right lower arm!

The Forgotten Beast bends The Fallen God's right lower arm with The Forgotten Beast's left lower arm, shattering the right elbow's bone!

A ligament in the right elbow has been torn and a tendon has been torn!

The Fallen God gives in to pain.

The Forgotten Beast scratches The Fallen God in the head and the severed part sails off in an arc!

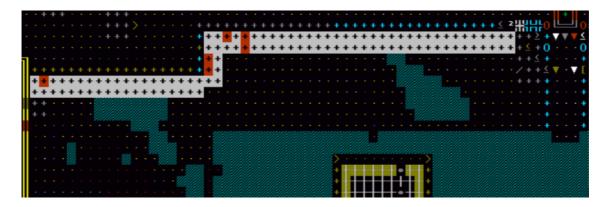
'Lur' Likotost, Fallen God has been struck down.
```

Its bloodlust somewhat satiated, the beast let out a trimphant roar and stamped its clawed and rotting feet upon its victims corpses. Outside the house, the dwarves of Failcannon casually locked the doors and went about their business.

Journal of 'Seth' Evonoltar, Overseer of Failcannon

Granite 6

It's seems the previous three applicants have turned down the job of running this place, and I can't say I blame them, now that I've got here. Between the smell of the stinking sea and the aroma of rotting flesh permeating the first two floors I almost vomited on the way inside. As I passed through the gate, I wondered how any defensive walls like ours were actually still standing, and my first act as Overseer was to expand on them.



A job's a job and it's my job to clean this place up and provide managerial know-how to our work force. It'll be an effort, but there are many able dwarves and vast hordes of resources to use. I've heard it's easy to die here at Failcannon, but we certainly won't ever starve to death, and the booze is plentiful.

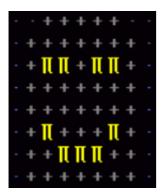
```
a stack of 80 prepared forgotten beast intestines.
```

The easy to die part would nonetheless seem to ring true, given the number of coffins in our burial chamber chambers. One can even ask the dead themselves how easy it is, I know I did.

```
`Erica' Luslemdoren, Ghostly Structural Engineer
Rigoth Tekkudlaltur, Ghostly Bone Carverdead
Fath Stinthädmeng, Ghostly Weaver Undead
`Neotemplar' Obokmìshos, Ghostly MasonUndead
`Deviled' Kuletibesh, Ghostly Siege Engineer
`Frosty_Dorf' Othavuz, Ghostly Royal Engineer
```

They're a pretty personable bunch, really, but they don't seem to realize they're dead. We'll have to get around to memorializing them one of these days.

Anyway, my tour of the fort's local landmarks was brief and guided by a surly looking fellow named breadbocks, who first showed me the Dwarven Effigy of the Cat Piss Ocean:



The Children's Petting Zoo:

```
Fath Dodókcudïst. Dwarven Child cancels Remove Construction: Interrupted by Skeletal Groundhog.
Titeb Athelmåmgoz, Dwarven Child cancels Remove Construction: Interrupted by Skeletal Groundhog.
```

The Local Prison:

```
Lupusater' Nunuroddom, Metalsmith
"Lupusater' Crevicecloister"
Creator of Kastolon Kib Lesast, $

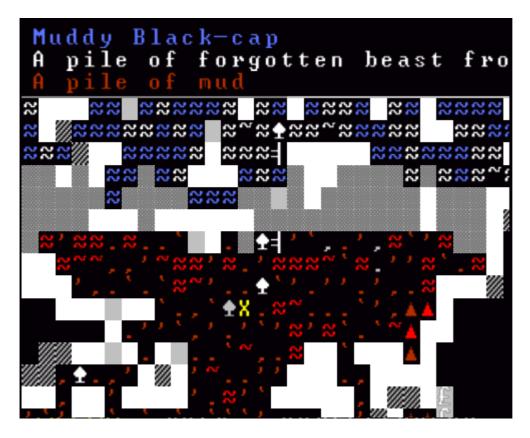
No Job (Chained)

25 Days in Prison.

Violation of Production Order.

Injured Party: 'Andreus X'
```

The Cove of Disease and its poison-covered trees:



And of course, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



By the time we reached the Laboratory I was ready to call it a day. Whatever it means by contaminants, it gives me chills.



I made it to my quarters feeling accomplished with the decision to accept this assignment. I don't think it will be easy falling asleep here, but I figure there's no need to rush anything.

```
The dwarves suspended the construction of Floor.
The dwarves suspended the construction of Bed.
platinum Sarcophagus toppled by `Frosty_Dorf' Othavuz, Ghostly Royal
Engineer.
```

Granite 16

```
The Avesone Soldier's left lower leg takes the full force of the impact, shattering the bone!

The Avesone Soldier's left hand takes the full force of the impact, jamming the bone through the left wrist's muscle and shattering the left wrist's bone!

The Avesone Soldier's right upper arm takes the full force of the impact jamming the bone through the right shoulder's muscle and shattering the right shoulder's bone!

The Avesone Soldier's right lower leg takes the full force of the impact shattering the bone!

The Avesone Soldier is caught in a burst of yellow sand!

The Avesone Soldier stands up.

The Avesone Soldier is no longer stunned.

The Avesone Soldier gives in to pain.
```

Our Mayor Dariush was badly injured during a construction accident on the new wall structure. I feel pretty guilty about that, but he really shouldn't have tried building a floor off a bridge.

I've had the strangest feeling of dread all day long. I can't quite put my finger on it.



Slate 2

A diplomat has left unhappy.

Diplomat? There was a Diplomat here? I'm sorry, I was too busy starting at the

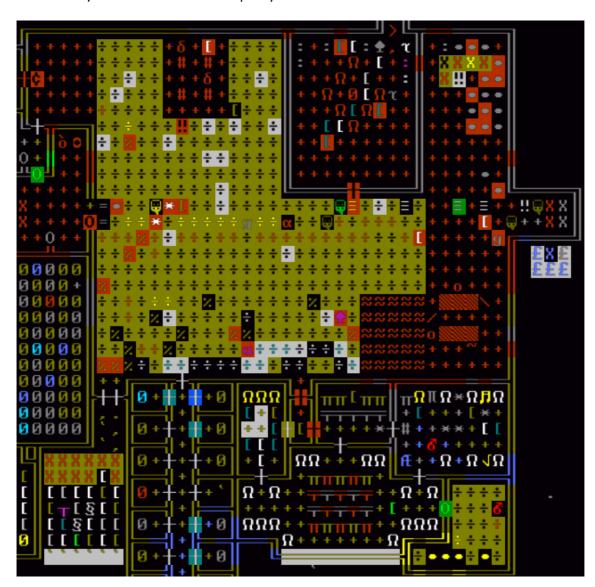
That's odd. I seem to have blacked out there for a moment. I'm just so happy right now. Adamantine's the best.

Slate 20

Migrants have arrived, not a moment too soon. Productivity is severely lacking since one of the previous Overseers came up with a completely harebrained employment scheme I only recently noticed now that we need strand extractors. I've been spending my days re-assigning jobs to workers capable of doing them.

The flying ((silver bolt)) strikes The Goblin Thief

Some goblin meathead tried to kidnap a baby, so the marksdwarves shot it to the floor. The goblin, not the baby. In this fort one has to specify.



The goblin was right in the middle of our fort, amidst a stockpile of food so massive it would take all of us six years to move anywhere. I wasn't kidding when I said we had food. I'm suspending our farming operations to spare up the dwarfpower we need to renovate. There are a lot of new novice masons running 'round Failcannon these days.

Where was I? Oh yeah, how exactly did that goblin get so far into our fort undetected? Come on guys. I know that no one's a seasoned soldier except for Tupu, but *somebody* should have noticed the creepy little green thing with the furry sack was out of place. And I'm trusting my life to these people!

Anyway, the new Captain of the Guard chopped the goblin in half and celebrated by adopting a kitten that somehow hadn't been slaughtered beforehand. Allowing this to take place should be labelled a crime.

Besmar Nomalastesh, Stray Kitten (Tame) has adopted 'boozedorf'

Browsing the death records today. Our entire population has been completely replaced so often this entire place is essentially one great mortuary.

Slate 28

Several weeks ago when we drafted all able adults into the town militia, there were some calls of concern, but the benefits of arming the population pay dividends.

The Farmer hacks The Goblin Thief in the head with his axe* and the severed part sails off in an arc!

A recent thief was dispatched by a meek farmer with minimal cost of time or attention, and the farmer feels just thrilled with himself.

Felsite 1



A child has taken control of a craftshop I was planning to engrave slabs with. I hope the little blighter goes crazy, myself, but I've grudgingly told the dwarves to cut some gems for him since that will probably get him out of the way quicker. It was today I learned we have exactly one skilled jeweler in the entire fort, who'd been made a miner despite having no skill next to our five legendary miners. Alternatively, there are six farmers walking around claiming to be jewelers. Every day it's some new marvel to behold.

Felsite 2

Meng Zimeshuzol, Stray Kitten (Tame) has adopted 'boozedorf'

Damn it all. I wish we had some kitten rot to spare.

Felsite 3

A vile force of darkness has arrived!

Ah for the love of Lur

We're under attack by goblins. Tupu and boozedwarf tell me there's nothing to worry about. Easy to say when you're carrying the good weapons. I need to get my hands on one of those maces the guards are running around with.

I have some concern for a miner who is trapped outside our closed gate. I have no idea why he chose to drink from a barrel that was inexplicably left outside on the beach, but now he's got to pay for that foolishness.

Fortunately for Iggy, most of the goblins were more interested in rushing our heavily trapped trade entrance than in crushing a hapless drunk.



Still, goblins are goblins and you can't expect every single goblin to just follow orders and stick with the pack, so a couple of them inevitably wandered over to go say hello. Well, Iggy didn't like being interrupted one bit, and he gave them a piece of his mind.

```
The Goblin Maceman strikes at The Miner but the shot is parried!
The Miner counterstrikes!
The Miner strikes The Goblin Maceman in the right lower leg with his (copper pick), fracturing the bone through the ((giant olm leather robe))!
An artery has been opened by the attack, a motor nerve has been severed a ligament has been torn and a tendon has been torn!
The Goblin Maceman strikes at The Miner but the shot is parried!
The Miner counterstrikes!
The Miner strikes The Goblin Maceman in the lower body with his (copper pick), tearing the muscle through the ((cave fish leather cloak)) and spilling her stinking guts!
```

The second hadn't gotten the hint after Iggy had disemboweled the first, so he went and taught that one some manners too.

```
The Goblin Spearman strikes at The Miner but the shot is parried!
The Miner counterstrikes!
The Miner strikes The Goblin Spearman in the upper body with his (copper pick), tearing the muscle and tearing apart the upper spine's nervous tissue through the ((draltha leather cloak))!
A artery has been opened by the attack!
A tendon in the upper spine has been torn!
The (copper pick) has lodged firmly in the wound!
```

I was up in the Third Hand's tower trying to get a better view when I noticed Iggy wasn't the only one out there. I then noticed that there are indeed some drawbacks to arming the general population.

```
The Farmer loses hold of the *bronze battle axe*.
The Farmer loses hold of the X(giant cave spider silk hood)X.
The Farmer loses hold of the (pig tail fiber cap).
The Farmer loses hold of the X(pig tail fiber cap)X.
The Goblin Maceman shakes The Farmer around by the head and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The head is ripped away and remains in The Goblin Maceman's grip!
Shem Tôsednonom, Farmer has been struck down.
```

Poor dwarves never stood a chance.

```
The Goblin Axeman hacks The Trader in the lover body with her ((silver battle axe)) and the severed part sails off in an arc! 'Oglokoog' Limulkab, Trader has been struck down.
```

I tried to mobilize the marksdwarf squad, only to learn that there are no bolts in the entire fort. No bolts, despite literal tons of silver at our disposal as we wade ankle deep in the bones of a thousand creatures. Well, I found a couple of workshops that were literally nothing but a pile of bones and ashes in the courtyard and ordered our bolt makers to work for a damn living.

```
ash
Stray Bull Calf bone [15]TSK
Stray Horse Foal bone [13]
```

Felsite 8

Goblins been out there almost a week. Bolts taking too god damn long.

Felsite 16

```
the Kobold Thief Dofobrigus is fighting!
the Wrestler `LAAT' Kikrostuzlir is fighting!
Last Report Date: 16th Felsite, 533
```

Today LAAT found a kobold thief in the equipment room. The kobold won't be walking away from here with any treasure. Or anywhere, with anything.

```
The Wrestler gouges The Kobold Thief's left cheek with right hand, tearing it apart!

The Wrestler gouges The Kobold Thief's left eye with hand, tearing it amart!

The Wrestler gouges the Kobold Thief's left cheek with right hand, tearing the Wrestler gouges the Kobold Thief's left cheek with right hand, tearing the Wrestler gouges The Kobold Thief's left cheek with right hand, tearing it apart!

The Wrestler gouges The Kobold Thief's left cheek with right hand, tearing it apart!

The Wrestler gouges The Kobold Thief in the head with right hand, tearing it apart!
```

Goblins are still outside. Bolts aren't ready yet. A cat gave birth two days ago and the kittens were promptly turned into scraps of leather.

Felsite 19

```
The Wrestler gouges The Kobold Thief's lower lip with The right hand, tearing apart the muscle! The Wrestler gouges The Kobold Thief's upper lip with The right hand, tearing apart the muscle! The Kobold Thief regains consciousness. 19th Felsite, 533 The Kobold Thief passes out from exhaustion. The Wrestler gouges The Kobold Thief's right cheek with T
```

LAAT has been torturing the kobold for three days. We now consider him a Skilled Wrestler. Goblins are still out there. Bolts still aren't ready.

Felsite 20

```
You have struck milk opal!
'Gronchbag' Kikrostsikel, Masonic Axedwarf has been struck down.
Make cloth cloak (30) has been completed.
Digging designation cancelled: damp stone located.
Announcement Date: 20th Felsite, 533
```

A mason who'd been drafted into the militia thought that "Picking up equipment" somehow entailed marching straight through the trade entrance into the waiting mass of goblins there. The bridge has been raised, since most of our unwelcome visitors have already passed beyond it and I'm trying to assuage any further suicides, like the one Glacial was about to commit before a kobold sneak interrupted him.



The bolts still aren't finished. What the blazes is taking so long?

he has little patience.

Felsite 21

I've had enough of these goblins. They aren't advancing through the trapped corridor any longer, so I decided to pull the Stock Market Crash lever and send them all careening to their doom.



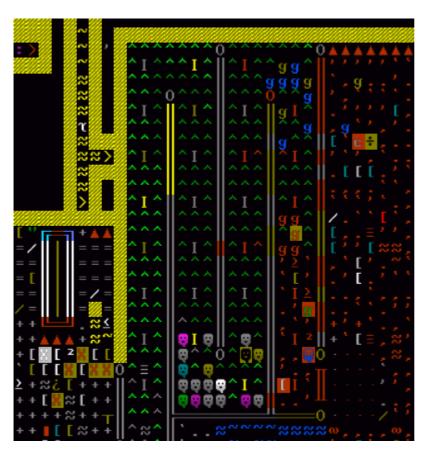
Two pillars collapsed. Two pillars. Absolutely no goblins were injured. It's nice to know we have to connect all those pillars to the lever, now that we could have used them. Since our last secret weapon has proved an utter failure, we now have to rely on our military might.

```
(giant cave spider silk quiver), Upper body
(rhesus macaque leather low boot), Right foot
(chestnut low boot), Left foot
(*«pine leggings»*), Lower body
green glass vial, (cave spider silk dress)
≡bismuth bronze crossbow≡, Left hand
```

Wow, I'll be praying for this bunch. At least Tupu knows what he's doing. That hammer of his could knock a mountain aside.

```
a masterful silver war hammer created by 'Zathel'
```

The soldiers gathered at one end of the trade corridor, staring down the goblins at the far side.



They exchanged sneers, then, as Tupu raised his hammer, the dwarves charged forth. The goblins seemed unsure about moving amidst the cage traps and held their ground against the attack.



I couldn't see the battle in those halls, and I know only what I heard.

```
The PAINBRINGER hacks The Goblin Axeman in the lower body from the side with her (steel battle axe) and the severed part sails off in an arc! The Soap Maker slashes The Goblin Spearman in the left lower arm with her (steel short sword), tearing apart the muscle through the ((mountain goat leather cloak))!
  eather cloak)!

sensory nerve has been severed!

he (steel short sword) has lodged firmly in the wound!

he Dancing Dagger strikes at The Goblin Axeman but the shot is blocked!

he Dancing Dagger strikes at The Goblin Axeman but the shot is blocked!

he Dancing Dagger stabs The Goblin Axeman in the lower body from the

ide with her (large steel dagger), bruising the muscle and bruising the

juts through the (black bear leather cloak)!

he Dancing Dagger stabs The Goblin Axeman in the right foot from the

ide with her (large steel dagger), tearing the muscle through the

(giant cave spider silk sandal)!
The PAINBRINGER misses The Goblin Axeman!
   he PAINBRINGER loses hold of the elk bird leather low boot.
                            Murderer hacks The Goblin Spearman in the lower body with his pattle axe) and the severed part sails off in an arc!
```

I know that at the end of the day there were twenty-six cheering dwarves and a hundred sniveling goblins in cages, all coated in the blood of their fellows. All in all, a good day.

No elves came to trade on account of our goblin problem. The year is off to a fantastic start!

Hematite 1

```
It is now summer.
'Robocorn' Ushulaban, Cheese Maker is throwing a tantrum, possessed by 'Neotemplar' Obokmishos, Ghostly Mason!
'Robocorn' Ushulaban, Cheese Maker has calmed down. 1st Hematite, 533
```

These ghosts are getting problematic. I'd like to do something about it, but we have our hands full at the moment.

```
Metal
               Strands/R
  tract
        Metal
               Strands/R
    Pond
          Large
            in
               Stockpile
      Item
               Stockpile
      Item
 .t/Pond
          Large
                Animal
Pit/Pond
         Large
                Animal
          Large
                Animal
Construct
           Building
      Item in Stockpi
            in Stockpile
    Pond
          Large
                Animal
 it/Pond
          Large
```

I considered two pressing issues: on one hand, a multitude of goblin prisoners, and a great deal of bones and body parts that for whatever reason, these dwarves will not use for any craft. Now, no self-respecting dwarf would butcher and carve up a sentient being, say, a goblin, just to work with its bones. However, if some sort of natural force - say a long fall - were to result in said goblin exploding apart, well, they would take no real issue with that.

I am happy to announce having killed two birds with one stone, by killing many goblins with a series of shovings. The Third Hand's Tower was recently finished for this purpose. We stopped adding full walls at the eighth story and settled for silver floors held up by golden supports, which go up for nine more stories. The goblin bone helmets and bolts and blocks in our future will aid us for generations.

We're speed-butchering goblins at a rate of about ten per day. Dwarves with a weak stomach are advised to stay clear of the area and its impending miasma. There are so many fragments of bodies I tried to tell the workers not to worry about cleaning them, but this is apparently already the standing order.

```
Current Refuse Orders:
r: Dwarves Ignore Refuse
```

Makes sense, after all, you can only encounter so much filth before giving up on confronting it.

Andreus' Tale

Meanwhile, Andreus the Ageless Wizard acquires a new form.

```
'Andreus XI' Nishmusöd, Agele
"Andreus XI' Tradechaste"
Bookkeeper, &

On Break

D|++||
D|++||
D|++||
A|+++=c==||
D|++||
```

Glacial entered the Sanctum of Andreus with a gargantuan, waterlogged book in his arms, and regarded his master carefully, studying the mannerisms, making sure it was him. "I see you've changed again," Glacial said. "When I returned to the house it was locked, the Cheese Maker said he heard Elk Birds in there. What happened?"

"The usual," Andreus shrugged. He was holding a stick of chalk before a slate wall covered in mathematical sigils. Glacial set the enormous book down on a stone table with a thud and looked over at the defaced wall. "Vicious bipedal lizard hidden away in the house, probably by its former psychotic occupant. But there is still time to save the God of Jealousy." Andreus marched to the soggy book and threw it open, rifled through the clumped-together pages.

"I had to look everywhere for it," Glacial said. "Lucus' tomb is a mess. What did you need from it?"

"There was a period when Lucus began talking of communion with the gods," Andreus said, scanning the open page with a fingertip. "Some considered him a prophet. At the time I wagged it off as nonsense, but now..." He found a line, squinted at it.

"What is it?" Glacial asked. He felt unnerved, as he always did when one of them had a new body. The change was a thing to get used to.

Andreus looked up at his apprentice. "Well."

"Well what?"

"What he describes... the things he writes of strike a familiar vein." The magister turned to the book and read aloud. "Fell sorceries, very dark. But here: 'You have seen before you what the future holds... Pave the way for one who can fix the Seal.""

"What's that exactly mean?"

"I'm not sure. But I have a few ideas." Andreus returned to the slate wall. "I need Thiefwitch back here, body or no! I need more answers. We'd barely time to speak ere the Gods thought to mock us once again."

"Can't you bring him back?"

"I'm not sure. I do expect his spirit to linger. With care I can prevent the shade from wandering anywhere, but it's proving tricky."

"Why tricky?" Glacial tried to decipher the cryptic symbols on the wall. "You've brought me back what, three times now? And half this place once before."

"It's different now. Something's missing." The Magister resumed chalking the wall, pausing to rub his beard. "I can detect the spirit's presence, not the location."

"Maybe you should die again and go look for him," Glacial suggested. Andreus stared at him.

Journal of 'Seth' Evonoltar, Overseer of Failcannon, excerpts

Malachite 1

Some migrants have arrived, despite the danger.

Some migrants with a death wish have arrived. They were conscripted as masons and metalsmiths and handed our crummiest weapons, of which we are increasing our supply. I want everyone over twelve years of age to be armed by Dwarfmas.

Forge silver war hammer Make wooden shield

We're also making silver spikes to install in various deathtraps in strategic locations throughout the fort. If I had my way they'd be magma-heated mixed with lead and sprinkled with lye. Sounds nice, but too time consuming. Perhaps if there's time later I'll soak them in the lake of disease I keep hearing about.

Malachite 3

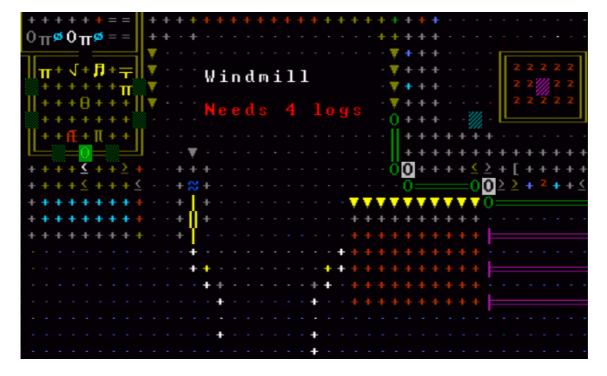
Brushing through the records of old Battlefailed, I came across the design for a weapon that the designer never lived to see function. If we are to properly represent the legacy we've inherited, it is essential we have some similar device.

In the lower levels of the fortress there is the framework for a massive power reactor, whose purpose I presume was to pump large amounts of liquid to the surface, possibly magma or the fetid stagnant ocean beneath us. Unfortunately, I can't seem to find the original engineer, who has completely disappeared. I'm told that this happens to dwarves here occasionally, they go off and are simply never heard from again. That's just the type of place this is.



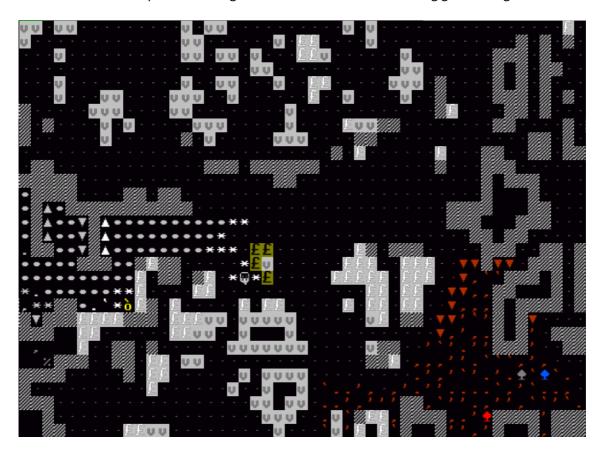
I tell you, whenever I have to walk around by myself, I keep a spare hand on the axe.

Anyway, the reactor is an important part of the greater defense structure, but for now I've been guiding our efforts toward the establishment of immediate perimeter defense. All the power we need will be given to us by the winds and the sea. Unfortunately again, there's been a slight hitch in the plan.



Living on a beach affords us little access to wood, and the trees we do have are hidden in caves which I'm told no dwarf should ever unearth. Naturally I disregarded such nonsense and told the

miners to carve a new path to the caves. We need logs more than we need fear, I say. I made sure the metalsmiths set up a defensive gate to seal shut in case something goes wrong.



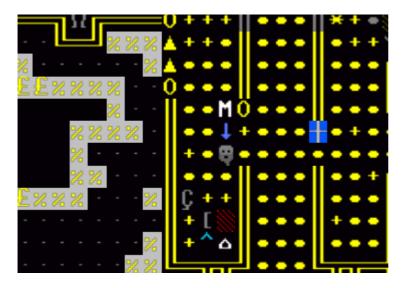
I'm well aware I ordered thirty wooden shields to be made but two days ago. Let's not point fingers here.

Malachite 7

```
Announcement Date: 7th Malachite, 533 cobaltite Door destroyed by Kor Kiksárek, Forgotten Beast.
```

Gods help me, they were right! Little Cappstv III ran into my office screaming about a massive eyeless bird that suddenly appeared in the new Hall of Masonry. I really need to stick a cage trap outside that door so I can avoid these kinds of interruptions.

Investigation revealed the terrified workers holding the creature at bay with whatever they could grab.



A little harsh encourgement and they suddenly remembered they were armed, and rushed forward to cut the bird right out of flight.

```
The Insane Architect hacks The Forgotten Beast in the lower body from behind with her Ebronze battle axeE, tearing apart the skin! The Insane Architect hacks The Forgotten Beast in the right foot from behind with her Ebronze battle axeE, tearing the muscle! The Forgotten Beast falls over.
```

They kept its thrashing body busy until the proper military arrived to finish it off.

```
The Kills of 'Elt' Fathginet

One Kill

Kor Speckechoed the forgotten beast, d. 533
```

Never ones for waste, the butchers were summoned straight away. No sense letting so much good poultry spoil.

```
Tale' Kabrovod, Trapper
"Tale' Namearch"

Butcher an Animal
Dabb+
Dabb+
Dabb+
Dabb+
Dabb+
Dabb+
Dabb+
Dabb+
Dabb-
Adequate Butcher
Adept Trapper
Novice Brewer
Novice Strand Extractor

(bismuth bronze shield), Righ
**silver war hammer*, Left han
-rope reed fiber trousers-, L
(alder leggings), Lower body
Kor Kiksárek's corpse, Hauled
```

9th Malachite

Little McArthur has not gone insane as hoped expected feared but has instead produced a glistening coal necklace I can't wait to try on.

```
Kâkdalilrom Uzlirgonggash, "Brimspeaks the Factional Flayer", a bituminous coal line is a bituminous coal amulet. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encircled with bands of nether-cap and cat leather. This object is adorned with hanging rings of copper and menaces with spikes of tunnel tube. On the item is an image of a circle in bituminous coal. On the item is an inage of a circle in shell opal. On the item is an image of a circle in nickel. On the item is an image of circles in bituminous coal.

On the item is an image of Thob Coastalguilds the dwarf and dwarves in jelly opal. Thob Coastalguilds is surrounded by the dwarves. The artwork relates to the ascension of the dwarf Thob Coastalguilds to the position of king of The Sword of Boots in 402.
```

The amulet depicts one of the last dwarven kings to rule the throne before the humans assumed power. Those were better days, the historians say. I can't say I know too much about Queen Led,

having spent so much of her reign in faraway lands, but I know her name came up several times in the logs of the former Overseers. It's no wonder the place is in such disarray when you have such paranoid nuts running things. Honestly, as though the Queen has nothing better to do than exterminate all the dwarves. How ridiculous.

12th Malachite

The late and great LordSlowpoke's adopted daughter, LordSlowpoke, is an insufferable menace.

```
Announcement Date: 12th Malachite, 533

The Magnificent Bastard 'LordSlowpoke' Tathzefon has organized a party
```

A plague on the little witch. I must now ensure every adult is busy and unable to join in this waste of construction time.

I went to the tyke's house to tell her off, but found the doors had been barred. A few dwarves tell me they heard noises within and sealed off the place to be safe. I'll have to send a team in to find out what happened once this militia is less pathetic. I could probably send in Tupu by himself, but he's busy protecting the masons from skeletal horses while the new walls are built. There are not enough dwarves, nor hours in the day for all we need done.

```
Some migrants have arrived, despite the danger.
Announcement Date: 13th Malachite, 533
```

Welcome to Failcannon, and the wonderful world of Masonry!

```
Rith Ilraltusung, Peasant
"Rith Treatyconjured"

P

No Job
Adequate Conversationalist

c: Combat b: Labor m: Misc
```

Except you. Uristein's been looking for an assistant, and you're perfect.

14th Malachite

Wretched migrants and their cats.

```
ùshrir Angenmomuz, Kitten ("ùshrir Faircrypts"
Pet of Erush Sibrekasteb, ?
```

I need to find some way to eliminate them. The cats, I mean, not the migrants. That would be silly.

16th Malachite

I have convinced the bone carvers that it's okay to use goblin bones since the goblins died of natural causes.

```
*goblin bone bolts [5]*

*goblin bone bolts [5]*

-goblin bone bolts [5]*

Snodub Xosnasong's bone [TSK

-goblin bone bolts [5]-

+goblin bone bolts [5]-

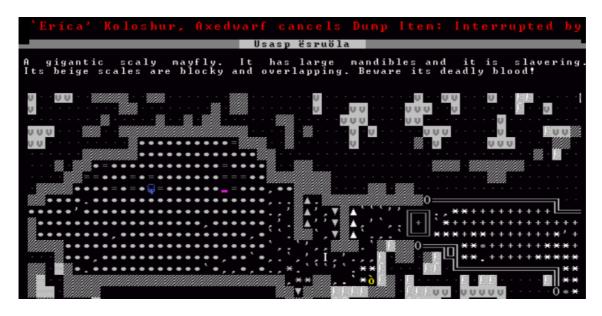
+goblin bone bolts [5]-

*goblin bone bol
```

What? Falling is a perfectly natural phenomenon.

18th Malachite

I awoke this morning to a problem.



You see, the woodcutters were taking their sweet long time with the wood cutting down in the lower caverns, so we weren't able to close the gate quick enough to keep out said problem. The dwarf who first spotted the problem was an axedwarf and very soon we had what would turn out to be poisonous blood all over the floor.



The axedwarf is no longer with us, but I'm sure she'd be gratified to know that the last thing she did before dying was expose all her comrades to horrible illness.

The Forgotten Beast throws The Axedwarf by the fourth toe

Rest in peace, Erika Koloshur.

```
The Axedwarf loses hold of the x(cave spider silk right mitten)x.
The Axedwarf loses hold of the x(pig tail fiber right glove)x.
The Axedwarf loses hold of the x(cave spider silk left mitten)x.
The Axedwarf loses hold of the x(pig tail fiber left glove)x.
The Axedwarf slams into an obstacle and blovs apart!
The Axedwarf slams into an obstacle!
"Erica' Koloshur, Axedwarf has died after colliding with an obstacle.
```

The monster was brought down by the next soldier to try taking it, a mere Recruit by the name of Thatdude. He fights with only a shield due to a missing hand, and this turned out to be for the best, as he was minimally exposed to the blood.

```
The Recruit strikes The Forgotten Beast in the head with his (bronze shield), tearing the fat and bruising the muscle and bruising the brain?

The Kills of 'Thatdude' Rûldodók

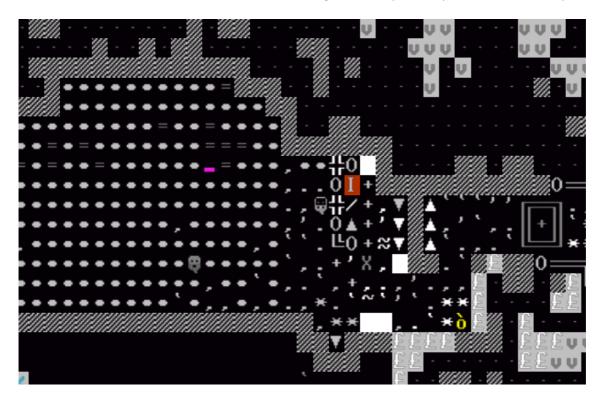
ûsbu Maliceyawn the goblin, d. 533

Stozu Thiefdungeons the goblin, d. 533

Usasp Creviceled the forgotten beast, d. 533

His right hand is gone. He is a risk-taker and a thrill-seeker.
```

Despite his bravery, he was ordered to stay in the area until we were sure what the symptoms were. Everyone knows that a beast with white blood could be poisonous, it's just a matter of what kind of poison. Given the vast unholy ocean we have sitting beneath us it could be anything. Engravers were sent to clean the area and masons are heading over to replace any contaminated ramps.



19th Malachite

The contaminated area is mostly cleaned and a marksdwarf will be stationed at the cave entrance for as long as the gate remains open. Which is not very longer, I hope.



Sadly, Thatdude is now walking at 1/5th the normal speed for a dwarf and claims to be unable to feel anything. A poor fate for a hero indeed. Still, he's faring better than poor Iggy. Now, when I first came to Failcannon, half the population were walking around in tattered rags, the other half got along on the nude. Part of my reason for ordering everyone into the militia was that I could mandate the wearing of proper, functional attire. Besides being tasteful, clothes provide protection from the elements, elements that sometimes include deadly poisons.

```
'Iggy' Mesirsigun, Miner
"'Iggy' Showertour"

XX(giant cave spider silk trousers)XX, Lower body
XX(donkey leather dress)XX, Upper body
XX(cave spider silk coat)XX, Upper body
XX(pig tail fiber cloak)XX, Upper body
XX(cave spider silk cap)XX, Head
XX(pig tail fiber hood)XX, Head
XX(giant cave spider silk left glove)XX, Left hand
XX(giant cave spider silk right glove)XX, Right hand
XX(giant cave spider silk right glove)XX, Right hand
XX(pig tail fiber right mitten)XX, Right hand
XX(pig tail fiber right mitten)XX, Right hand
coating of Usasp Creviceled's forgotten beast ichor coating coating capacity for coating ca
```

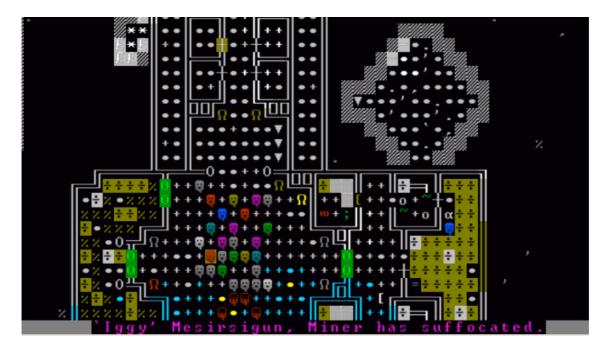
Miners and woodcutters, for whatever reason, do not feel obliged to wear their mandated attire unless they are called into active military service, in which case, they will not perform their civilian tasks.

```
Paralyzed
Winded
Cannot breathe
Ability to stand lost
Ability to grasp lost
Sensory nerve damage
```

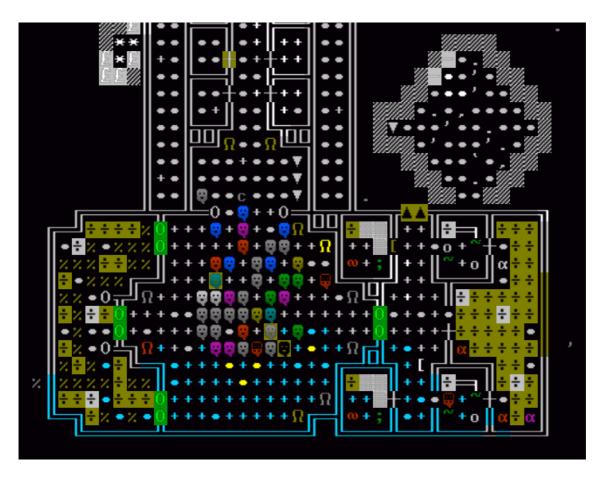
This lingering absurdity of dwarven custom is the reason lggy had to die. If he'd been wearing boots or even socks, the insidious venom could not have crept through his body like a devouring tide of army ants. Let it be known he died in performance of his duty, carving away a tainted ramp so that no one else would be poisoned by it.

By some miracle, none of the children were injured during the brief outbreak.

Malachite 20



While cleaning efforts ensue on the staircase above us, myself and near thirty other dwarves are stationed in a tertiary dining hall located deep in the fortress. We can't go up the stairs until all traces of poison are gone. Some of the children here have no shoes, and would surely die if they followed a parent upstairs.



It was just after noon when a dwarf came down the ramp tugging something colossal through the hall. It was Tale the butcher, sweating from exertion. We gathered in for a closer look.

"Tale... what is that?" someone asked.

```
"Tale' Namearch"

-pig tail fiber cloak-, Upper (bismuth bronze shield), Right #silver war hammer*, Left hand -rope reed fiber trousers-, Localder leggings), Lower body Usasp ësruöla's corpse, Hauled
```

```
Weight: 8553Γ

Contents:

Usasp ësruöla's corpse

spatter of Usasp Creviceled's forgotten beast ichor spatter of Usasp Creviceled's forgotten beast ichor
```

It was, of course, the poisonous monster's corpse, and soon panic spread and everyone mindlessly fled from the scene. In confusion, Tale dropped the body and ran away screaming too. A cat stepped onto the corpse and wasted no time in rotting to death. It seems I need to speak with the butchers about the meaning of the word "edible."

Again, despite the disaster, no children were hurt. I say no children because during the panic, a drawbridge was ordered shut and unlucky timing resulted in the death of a soldier.

```
Announcement Date: 20th Malachite, 533
'MadJax' Enolthîkut, Soldier has been crushed by a drawbridge.
```

Rest in peace, MadJax.

Later in the day, I found an engraver named The True Mekboy dying of thirst in his dungeon cell. Our squallid prison conditions are in dire need of improvement, but it's not my greatest concern; still, I couldn't bear to watch the lad die of thirst in chains like that, so I let him out to have a drink.

Well, turns out I should have spoken to the Fortress Guard about that, because when Xenos found the prisoner outside his cell, he was deeply distressed.

```
The Tanner stabs The Engraver in the left upper leg with his (-«-bronze spear-»-), fracturing the bone through the XX(giant cave spider silk trousers)XX!

An artery has been opened by the attack, many nerves have been severed and a tendon has been torn!

The (-«-bronze spear-»-) has lodged firmly in the wound!

The Tanner twists the embedded (-«-bronze spear-»-) around in The Engraver's left upper leg!

The Tanner stabs The Engraver in the upper body with his (-«-bronze spear-»-), tearing the muscle and shattering the right true rib through the X(pig tail fiber cloak)X!

An artery has been opened by the attack!

A tendon in the right true rib has been torn!

The (-«-bronze spear-»-) has lodged firmly in the wound!

The Tanner twists the embedded (-«-bronze spear-»-) around in The Engraver's upper body!

The Tanner stabs The Engraver in the lower body with his (-«-bronze spear-»-), tearing the muscle and tearing the guts through the XX(giant cave spider silk trousers)XX!

The Engraver looks sick!
```

The Guard made sure someone came to take Mekboy to the hospital after stabbing him up a few times, a decision I commend. I mean, he could've just dragged the Engraver back to his cell, but no, he did the right thing and I'm proud of him.

```
"The True Mekboy' Slingswallo

upper body
lower body
head
right upper arm Nauseous
left upper arm
right lower arm
left lower arm
right hand
left hand
right upper leg
right lower leg
right foot
left foot
```

23rd Malachite

Visited Mekboy in the hospital today, he's doing well.

```
'frozen' Athelmamgoz, Dwarven Child cancels Rest: Paralyzed. x2 'frozen' Athelmamgoz, Dwarven Child cancels Rest: Paralyzed. x3 'frozen' Athelmamgoz, Dwarven Child 23rd Malachite Paralyzed. x6 'frozen' Athelmamgoz, Dwarven Child 23rd Malachite Paralyzed. x2 'frozen' Athelmamgoz, Dwarven Child cancels Rest: Paralyzed. x2
```

frozen wouldn't shut up about how he couldn't move. If he really is paralyzed, then why is he able to bother me so much? Kids these days, always full of complaints.

24th Malachite

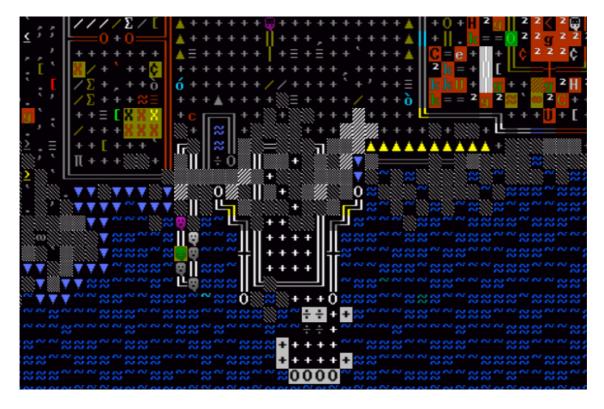
```
`frozen' Athelmåmgoz, Dwarven Child has suffocated. 24th Malachite, 533
`Elderont' Medenkib Ron Kuthdêng has created a masterpiece!
```

I feel kind of bad now that frozen is dead.

In other news, for a brewer, Elderont cooks up a mean muck root stew.

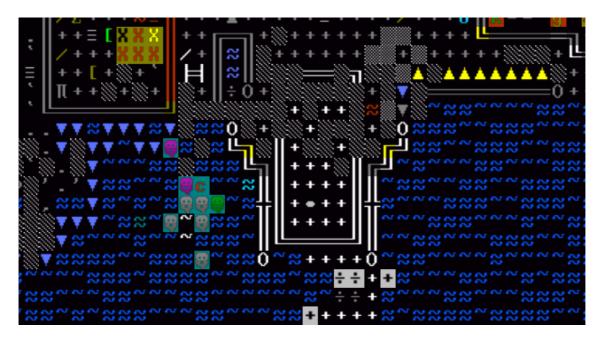
25th Malachite

Concerns about an outbreak of plague like the one to strike Battlefailed has led to the employment of my latest brainchild. I called it the Dwarven Diving Board.



Anyone who has been anywhere near the exposed areas has been ordered onto the end of a sturdy silver bridge set between the Cheese Maker's Guild and the base of our new defense system. I don't envy the dwarves who are to be plunged into those slimy, stinking, jellyfish-infested waters, but telling them it was that or a slow, rot-filled death made for a compelling argument.

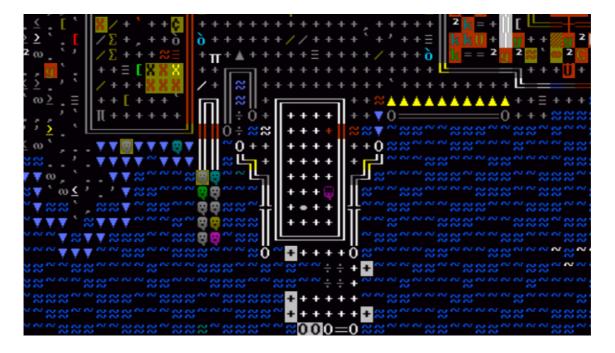
I haven't yet tested it out yet. Here goes!



Eureka!



Huge Success! They loved it so much, they went right back on for another go, and not just because they were ordered to.



Who am I to forbid them such a good time? Happy dwarves are productive dwarves!

It's good to see them all laughing and smiling for once. My research would suggest it is the morale of the populace that most often decides whether or not a fortress succeeds.



At any rate, if this helps the soldiers learn how to swim, all the better.

```
'ArcaneSaint' Uzolushat, Doct
"'ArcaneSaint' Oilybasements'
Chief Medical Dwarf, &

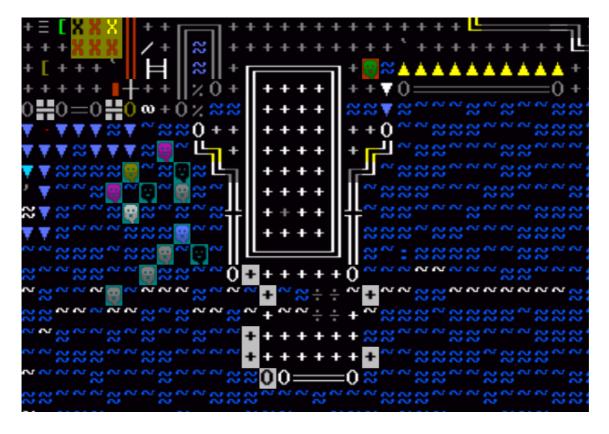
Soldier (cannot follow order)
Competent Swimmer
```

Galena 10

```
'Moxie' Shorastgigin, Marksdwarf has suffocated.
Announcement Date: 10th Galena, 533
```

Tragedy struck on the beach when Moxie was killed using the Dwarven Diving Board. Instead of the water, he landed on the shale stone on the side of the shore and died quietly. May she rest in peace.

Use of the Diving Board is now restricted. I'm told the device is dangerously addictive anyway, since the soldiers were having so much fun they didn't even notice Moxie wasn't okay until hours had passed.



Galena 20

It's been a very quiet month. Not much to report, the caves are finally shut and the windmills are getting built. The surface level is slightly cleaner than it used to be. Constructions getting done. There's still ghosts popping out at you every now and again, but once you get used to them, they not very frightening.

Galena 12

```
Snatcher! Protect the children!
'Deathsword' Asmelkir has become a Swordsdwarf.
'An ambush! Curse them!
```

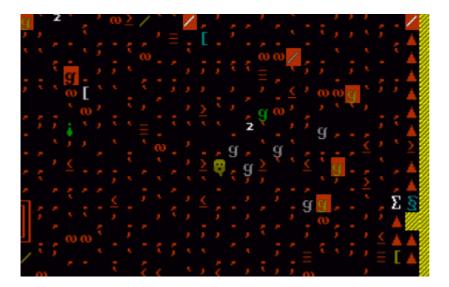
Deathsword spotted a few goblins approaching from the northwest and charged down a lone thief by the gate.

```
The Butcher stabs The Goblin Thief in the left upper leg with his *adamantine short sword*, fracturing the bone through the ((giant cave spider silk cloak))!

A sensory nerve has been severed and a tendon has been torn!
The *adamantine short sword* has lodged firnly in the wound!
The Butcher twists the embedded *adamantine short sword* around in The Goblin Thief's left upper leg!
The Butcher charges at The Goblin Thief!
The Butcher strikes at The Goblin Thief!
The Butcher collides with The Goblin Thief!
The Goblin Thief is knocked over!
The Butcher strikes at The Goblin Thief but the shot is parried!
The Goblin Thief counterstrikes!
The Goblin Thief counterstrikes!
The Goblin Thief stabs The Butcher in the left foot with his ((large iron dagger)), chipping the bone through the (iron low boot)!
A ligament has been torn and a tendon has been torn!
The Butcher falls over.
The Butcher gives in to pain.
```

Nice try, Deathsword.

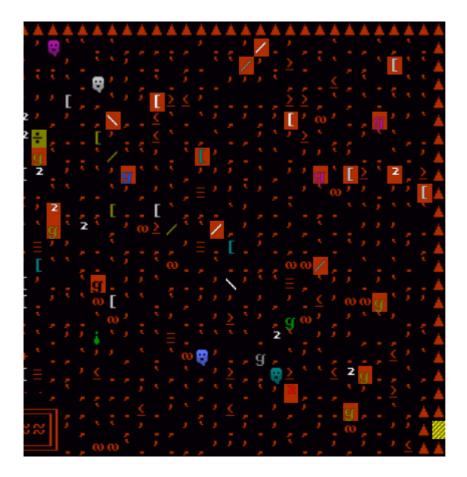
Down in the southeast canyon, a Speardwarf courageously charged at the bulk of the goblin force all by himself.



Well, you know what happens next. Rest in peace, hellbored.

```
The Goblin Lasher lashes The Speardwarf in the head with her ((silver whip)), bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing the brain!
The Speardwarf has been knocked unconscious!
'hellbored' Adilatul, Speardwarf has been struck down.
```

Reinforcements arrived too late to save the Speardwarf, but they were able to drive off the goblins without further casualties. hellbored was awarded the Golden Sock for his actions today.



Galena 21

```
The Skeletal Horse kicks The Cat in the head with her right front hoof, bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing apart the brain!

*Ushat Mebzuthnish, Cat (Tame) has been struck down. 21st Galena
```

A cat suddenly found itself outside the gate where a herd of undead horses were waiting. Heheheh.

Galena 23

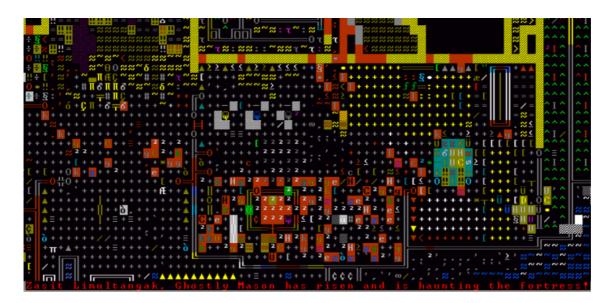
```
a masterful goblin bone left gauntlet created by 'Tupu'
```

Tupu has been making some excellent stuff out of goblin bone. Is there anything Tupu can't do?

Limestone 2

A human caravan from Gil Thinir has arrived.

Humans have come to trade and are expressing great interest in our new Adamantine Trade Depot. They were informed the metal is not for sale. Instead, we are sending them home with some of our many barrels of gnomeblight in exchange for valley herbs and precious metals. They think we're selling them medicine for a plague that hit their village. I love how gullible humans are.



They brought us some... interesting items.

```
(deer n/a [10])
This is a stack of 10 deer n/a.
```

Like Deer n/a. Whatever Deer n/a is, we bought ten stacks of it. I'm gonna feed some to the cats and see what happens.

Seriously, where do they come up this stuff?

Limestone 4

```
Libash Tadcatten, Cat (Tame) has given birth to kittens.
```

We are under attack by a fearsome foe. Do not falter, fellows of Failcannon, rest assured I will not waver on my watch.

Limestone 8

```
The Stray Kitten (Iame) has been struck down.
'Elderont' Medenkib Ron Kuthdêng has created a masterpiece! 8th Limestone, 533
'Xellas' Mesiråblel, Doctor Mechanic is throwing a tantrum, possessed by
'Neotemplar' Obokmishos, Ghostly Mason!
'Xellas' Mesiråblel, Doctor Mechanic cancels Dump Item: Throwing tantrum.
```

Xellas went a bit crazy today, nearly starting a fist fight with one of the kids. He claims it was the work of a vengeful spirit so I guess it's about time to address the ghost issue.

```
'Xellas' Mesirablel has been very unhappy lately. She has been possessed by the dead lately.
```

Ghosts are becoming a big problem in forts nowadays, what with the land morphing and cities vanishing and what have you. Still, there's a pretty easy way to get them out of your hair: just bury their bodies or design a memorial or them and make sure they see it, and then just ignore them! Soon they've go on to wherever it is ghosts go when they're bored.

```
'Frosty_Dorf' Othavuz, Ghostly Royal Engineer has been put to rest.

Announcement Date: 8th Limestone, 533 has been put to rest.

'Xellas' Mesiråblel, Doctor Mechanic has calmed down.
```

It's much quieter now. I almost miss those guys. What were their names again?

Limestone 22

```
Sonigath Enalaster, "Oraclescraped the Prin Appearance", a orthoclase grate

This is a orthoclase grate. All craftsduarfship is of the highest quality. It is encrusted with rose quartz, decorated with rope reed fiber and encircled with bands of orthoclase and aquamarine. This object is adorned with hanging rings of rock crystal and menaces with spikes of orthoclase and tin. On the item is an image of Srifithonkis the kobold in electrum. On the item is an image of a diamond in electrum.

**Greader' Sazirrulush, Stoneworker has created Somigath Enalaster, a orthoclase grate!**
```

Today Greader produced a magnificent grate I can think of absolutely no use for. Still, it's exquisite, and I like the kobold he put on there. It should be installed somewhere public, in such a way that it cannot be stolen.

Sandstone 6

Sandstone 7

```
This is a ettin cage (maple).
```

When I hear of a good thing to do with our new captive Ettin, we'll do that.

```
10th Sandstone
Some migrants have arrived, despite the danger.
```

A few Dabbling Metalsmiths have arrived, despite the danger. I don't know what they thought they were going to do when they got here, but most of them were unskilled buffoons lucky to have us here to give them a home and a job. They don't get to pick which job, but they certainly have one.

Some of the new arrivals were rightly pleased with the arrangement.

```
Adequate Fish Cleaner
High Master Weaponsmith
Skilled Gem Setter
Novice Concentration
```

Others are less so, complaining about 'wasted talent' and a number of other things.

```
High Master Carpenter
Competent Butcher
Novice Miller
Adequate Bone Carver
Competent Leader
Novice Teacher
```

Look, if a Carpenter migrates to a place were wood doesn't exist, they should be thankful to get a job at all that doesn't involve falling a great distance.

```
'MadJax' Enolthikut, Ghostly Soldier has risen and is haunting the fortress!

Announcement Date: 10th Timber, 533
```

Whoops, looks like someone forgot to hold that memorial service for MadJax. He's understandably ticked off, but has been kind enough to keep to himself while we try to remember something about him important enough to engrave on a slab.

12th Timber

A vile force of darkness has arrived!

Well, here we go again. More goblins, lots of them from the west. This'll be fun. I didn't feel like dragging all the workers inside away from their important outdoor functions, so the soldiers were sent out under protest to meet the attackers on the beach to keep them distracted.

I sat in the Third Hand's Tower as usual to get the best possible view. I brought a bag of rock nuts along in case I got hungry, and I did.

```
The Dancing Dagger stands up.
The flying ((copper arrow)) strikes The Dancing Dagger in the right lower leg, tearing the skin through the (-steel greaves-)!
The ((copper arrow)) has lodged firmly in the wound!
The Dancing Dagger misses The Goblin Swordmaster!
The Goblin Swordmaster counterstrikes!
The Goblin Swordmaster stabs The Dancing Dagger in the left lover arm with her ((*iron long sword*)), bruising the skin through the Erope reed fiber cloak!
The Dancing Dagger misses The Goblin Swordmaster!
The Goblin Swordmaster counterstrikes!
The Goblin Swordmaster stabs The Dancing Dagger in the left lover arm with her ((*iron long sword*)), bruising the skin through the Erope reed fiber cloak!
```

Mipe is so lucky. Tough little thing for someone so wiry.

```
The Axe Murderer hacks The Goblin Bowman in the head with his *adamantine battle axe* and the severed part sails off in an arc!
```

Way to go, boozedorf! Keep mining that goblinite!

```
The flying ((silver arrow)) strikes chipping the bone through the (iron The Recruit stands up. The Recruit gives in to pain.
```

What's the matter with you, CatalystParadox! Get up! Fight!

That's it!

```
'CatalystParadox' Kinrimtar, Recruit has entered a martial trance! 'Xenos' Nomalèrith has become a Speardwarf.
'boozedorf' Ustuthisan Elikïssunrath Lumash, Axe Murderer has entered a martial trance!
'Sinpwn' Shagogrimtar, Combat Engraver cancels Recover Wounded: Handling dangerous creature.
'Tupu' Ostral Katthir Dumat, Champion has entered a martial trance!
```

Tupu's arrived, hammer in hand! This will be over soon.

```
The Champion shakes The Goblin Pikeman around by the throat
```

Haha, he tore the goblin's throat out with his teeth. Classic Tupu!

```
The Dancing Dagger slashes The Goblin Swordmaster in the head with her (large steel dagger) and the severed part sails off in an arc!
```

Nice one, Mipe! That'll teach 'em!

```
The flying (-goblin bone bolt-) strikes The Goblin Bowman
```

Great shot, Greader! Wow, I'm so impressed with everyone out there. I'd be out there fighting with you, but you know... my back...

Well, looks like we can call it a day.

```
The Champion counterstrikes!
The Champion misses The Goblin Pikeman!
The Goblin Pikeman stabs The Champion in the left hand from behind with her ((copper pike)), tearing apart the muscle through the #goblin bone left gauntlet#!
An artery has been opened by the attack and a sensory nerve has been severed!
The Champion loses hold of the *adamantine war hammer*.
```

Oh no! Tupu's been injured! But he picked up the hammer with his other hand and continues the fight!

```
The Champion bashes The Goblin Pikeman in the upper body with his *adamantine war hammer*, bruising the muscle and bruising the left lung through the (<br/>
through the (<br/>
black bear leather cloak)<br/>
The Goblin Pikeman strikes at The Champion but the shot is blocked!<br/>
The Champion attacks The Goblin Pikeman but He jumps away!<br/>
The Goblin Pikeman stabs The Champion in the right hand from behind with his ((iron pike)) and the severed part sails off in an arc!<br/>
The Goblin Pikeman punches The Champion in the left ear with his right hand, tearing apart the cartilage through the X(giant cave spider silk cloak)X!
```

Oh no, Tupu! Get over there and help Tupu, you rejects!

Oh sweet schist, now there's another bunch of archers. Tupu's holding on but I'm not sure how long he's got. Thank the Gods we found the adamantine, that helmet's the only thing saving his life!

```
pike>>>, but the attack is deflected by The Champion's \( \) \( \) adamantine helm\( \)!

The Goblin Pikeman stabs The Champion in the head with her ((copper pike>)), but the attack is deflected by The Champion's \( \) adamantine helm\( \)!

The Goblin Pikeman stabs The Champion in the head with his ((iron pike>)) but the attack is deflected by The Champion's \( \) adamantine helm\( \)!

The Goblin Pikeman stabs The Champion in the head with her ((copper pike>)), but the attack is deflected by The Champion's \( \) adamantine helm\( \)!

The Goblin Pikeman stabs The Champion in the head with his ((silver pike>)), but the attack is deflected by The Champion's \( \) adamantine helm\( \)!

The Goblin Pikeman stabs The Champion in the head with his ((silver pike>)), but the attack is deflected by The Champion's \( \) adamantine helm\( \)!

The Goblin Pikeman stabs The Champion in the head with her ((copper pike>)), but the attack is deflected by The Champion's \( \) adamantine helm\( \)!

The Goblin Pikeman stabs The Champion in the head with his ((iron pike>)) but the attack is deflected by The Champion's \( \) adamantine helm\( \)!
```

Soldiers have charged the marksgoblins, and there look to be heavy casualties. Their leader is a stout pikeman employed in skewering Elth, our apprentice Cheesemaker.

```
The Goblin Pikeman stahs The Cheesemaker in the left lover arm
```

Damn it all, this was going so well before. I only hope that -

```
The Dancing Dagger stabs The Goblin Pikemaster in the head with her (large steel dagger), tearing the muscle, shattering the skull and tearing the brain through the ((«*cave spider silk hood*»))!
```

Yes! That dagger sure knows how to dance!

O, thank the stone, the goblins are routing. Everyone seems to have survived the battle, even Tupu, who is walking off the battlefield on his own power. Amazing, but given his injuries, I doubt he'll ever fight or craft again. A loss, alas.

```
Tupu' Foldsilvers
                       the
                            Nouri
upper
       body
                  Tired
lower
       body
head
right
                  Nauseous
       upper
              arm
                  Extreme
     upper
             arm
                  Pale
left
      lower
            arm
right
                   Thirsty
        oot
```

14th Timber

For lack of anything better to do with it, the Ettin was stowed in the Western Surface Courtyard with a stern warning posted over the lever that releases it.

Scientific Protocol Urist Rigoth Id Sath Tekkud - Six Experiment #043

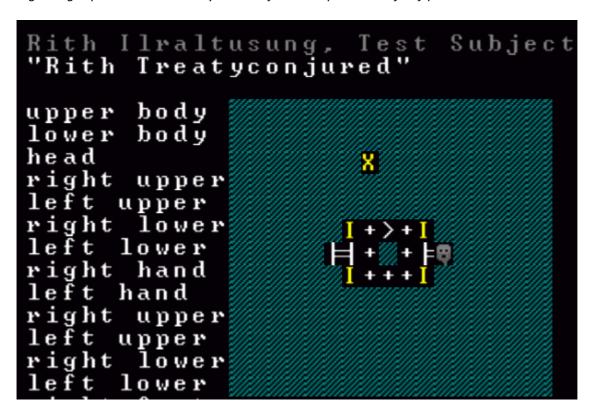
Observation: Dwarves permit themselves to use the limbs of sentient enemies killed and sectioned by high velocity impact.

Hypothesis: Experiment will determine if Dwarves permit themselves to use the limbs of fellow Dwarves killed and sectioned by high velocity impact.

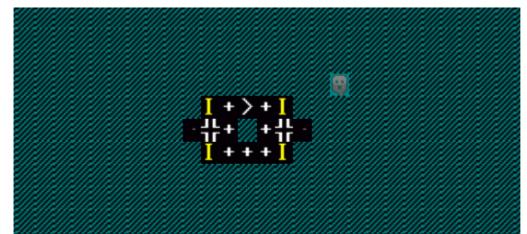
Procedural Overview: A lever was created at the base of the Tower situated within the Courtyard

above the surface. The lever was attached to bridges built on the top of the Tower and withdraw when activated.

Test Subject Treatyconjured was stationed on the outer tip of the eastern bridge. Moral quandaries regarding experiment resolved by Test Subject's complete lack of self-preservative sense.



Lever was pulled.





Result: Test Subject died instantaneously due to high velocity impact. Catastrophic amputation of all limbs was complete.

Test Subject's body parts were not properly identified and forbidden after experimental procedure. Presence of many witnesses to the "accident" ensured the parts were buried before the day's end, rendering the entire procedure futile. Caravan from Dastot Cog will likely report the incident.

Conclusion: Inconclusive. Further experimentation required.

Over three decades ago...

Tracing the outer edges of reality, below the Crucible of Worlds where legions of deities issued forth new worlds by the forces of math and language and energy, the spawning pool of innumerable souls, sidelong the endless row of moons and worlds affixed to stars bequoth existence by sheer will of force, atop a parabolic arc of light and shadow and shifting hues was shored a low-lying building that looked to mortal eyes like stone and mortar swathed in living paint, a structure stretching past the edge of vision to a fine and distant point.

Where no living mortal had ever stood, an ancient spirit quite familiar with the afterlives held a wispy palm to the wall in silent reverence. *I cannot believe it,* he thought. *At long last.* Here lay the sum of all the knowledge in the cosmos, and though it would take longer than eternity to read every text, he had a specific volume in mind.

He walked until he found what seemed to be a pair of tall iron doors set into the polished stone that yet sparkled musically across a spectrum of yellows and purples. He grasped the handle and a heavy bolting sound thundered through the door as it swung open.

Drawing empty breath to ghostly lungs, the wizard stepped inside. There, miles of ornate wooden bookshelves spiraled around an impossibly tall ceiling illuminated by self-suspended chandeliers all blazing with torches. Numbers lined the end of each enormous shelf that framed a circular desk with a small silver bell set upon it.

Uncertainly, the wizard approached the desk. The Library was too vast for even the Gods to be constantly watching every bit of it, but any minute now he could be discovered and kicked back to mortality. With a few sideways glances, he tapped the bell, and in the air behind the desk appeared a plume of gray and purple smoke. "Index number?" inquired a soothing basso from the midst of the cloud.

"One-hundred ten point twenty-three."

"Access to this file is restricted," said the voice. "Please submit the password."

"Koganusân."

"Password accepted," responded the voice, and the book appeared in the air before him as the smoke faded away. Phantom heart pounding away in his ectoplasmic chest, his trembling hands reached out for the book. He needed to know if the secret lay within. The lowest of screams, barely enough to be heard, rolled through the air in a hazy static. As the book was plucked from the air, an absolute silence unfolded and the pages flipped themselves open, ancient words in crimson ink casting out an eerie glow.

The Rebirth of Mortals was a secret created by the goddess Ura in a time before time. Whosoever learns the secret shall be empowered to raise the living from the dead. Beware the curse of undeath!

In a time before time, the goddess Ura inscribed The Rebirth of Mortals to Dawntumors, a chameleon fiend leather tome.

In the year 500, the ghostly wizard Andreus learned The Rebirth of Mortals in the Lost Library.

Journal of 'Seth' Evonoltar, Overseer of Failcannon, excerpts

```
A section of the cavern has collapsed! 28th Timber 'Aik' Dasnastsodel, Smith Doctor has died after colliding with an obstacle.
```

A talented dwarf named Aik was killed during a construction accident along the outer wall. She will be missed by her five surviving cats. Rest in peace, Aik. Poor Little McArthur was caught in the falling rubble and sustained two broken legs, but I think we have enough splints to patch up our youngest legend.

```
Winter is upon you.
Ast Sokanrimtar, Kitten (Tame) has suffocated.
```

Winter has seen the continuing visitation of the caravan from Graspedseduce, who continue to barter with us despite witnessing the unfortunate accident involving Rith several days ago. They tell us the dwarves of Graspedseduce have sprouted an open rebellion against the Queen's rule, and we're assisting the cause by sending the caravan home with the finest wooden arms Failcacnnon had ever stolen from dead elves. Conversely, we managed to purchase an entire fort's worth of fine armor and weapons by selling a few barrels of Elderont's Famous Roasted Seeds, worth about six steel breastplates a pop. Elderont's got a real racket going here. He cooks the seeds of drinks he brews and everyone loves his stuff so I fear an outbreak of rioting inevitably looms should he ever die.

```
Tulon Vabôkshar has become a Stray Cat.
Monom Sazirkôn has created a masterpiece!
'Greader' Sazirrulush, Stoneworker has grown crossbow!
Obok Urdimasob has become a Stray Cat.
```

Time seems to be moving faster and faster as we continue to clean up the place, store unsorted goods, and cull the furry menace from our halls. The days are blurring together. Construction projects continue and fortress morale is at an all time high but for a few malcontents who will surely come 'round eventually.

```
Tupu' Ostral Katthir Dunat has been ecstatic lately. He admired a fine Burial Receptacle lately. He had a nice bath recently. He received food recently. He received water recently. He was rescued recently. He has been attacked lately. He took joy in slaughter lately. He had a fine drink lately. He ade a truly decadent dish lately. He slept without a proper room recently. He admired a fine tastefully arranged Slab lately. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He has been haunted by the dead lately. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He was caught in the rain recently. He was able to rest and recuperate lately. He has been satisfied at work lately.

He is a vorshipper of Enshal Dawnfuture.

He is a citizen of The Svord of Boots. He is a member of The Enchanted Labor of Treaties. He is an enemy of The Seductions of Focusing. He is an enemy of The Barbarity of Tormenting. He is an enemy of The Ueiled Beans. He is an enemy of Stukuludragis. He is the militia commander of The Enchanted Labor of Ireaties.

He is eighty-four years old, born on the 17th of Granite in the year 449.

His left ear is broken. His right true rib is fractured. His left lower leg is fractured. His left hand is dented. His right lower arm is dented.

His anethyst eyes are narrow. He is carpulent. His very long sideburns are narrow. His nedium-length moustache is arranged in double braids. His lower last is vrinkled. His right lower arm bears a straight scar. His peach skin is vrinkled. His right lower arm bears a straight scar. His peach skin is vrinkled. His right lower arm bears a straight scar. His peach skin is vrinkled. His right lower arm bears a straight scar. His peach skin is vrinkled. His right lower arm bears a straight scar. His left hand bears a massive straight scar.

He is very aglie, very strong, very slow to tire and tough.

Tupu' Ostral Katthir Dunat likes puddingstone, trifle pewter, tiger iron, coral, giant cave spider silk, rope reed fiber fabric, long svords, mail shirts and coins. Uhe nossible, he prefers to consume band
```

Tupu has not only survived his incredible injuries, but continues to serve as our Fortress Champion. Missing his right hand and without fine control over his left, he remains unable to perform any civilian duties (including, sadly, his bone carving), but this has not prevented him from wielding a shield and a shiny new silver hammer and keeping a constant vigil over our gates.

```
This is a superior quality goblin bone helm. This object is adorned with hanging rings of masterfully worked cow horn by 'Iupu' Ostral Katthir Dumat. On the item is a finely-designed image of two cave spiders in horse hoof by 'Tupu' Ostral Katthir Dumat.
On the item is a superiorly designed image of dwarves in cow hoof by 'Dern' Sibrekasteb. The dwarves are laboring. The artwork relates to the foundation of Failcannon by The Enchanted Labor of Treaties of The Sword of Boots in the early spring of 516.
On the item is an exceptionally designed image of Nithari Pantedtwigs the Tumors of Dawning the ocean titan in mule hoof by 'Tupu' Ostral Katthir Dumat. Nithari Pantedtwigs the Tumors of Dawning is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the ocean titan Nithari Pantedtwigs the Tumors of Dawning in The Blueness of Malodors in a time before time.
On the item is an exceptionally designed image of a mahogany in donkey hoof by 'Tupu' Ostral Katthir Dumat.
```

I wish everyone were more like Tupu.

```
'Grath' Tomêmurdim, Arrow-Catcher has given birth to a girl.
14th Moonstone
```

Grath has produced another adorable, drooling drain on our resources. May she live long enough to start helping our sunberry harvest.

```
A section of the cavern has collapsed! Announcement Date: 11th Opal, 533
The dwarves suspended the construction of Wall.
The dwarves suspended the construction of Wall.
'boozedorf' Ustuthisan Elikissunrath Lumash, Axe Murderer has drowned.
'Draconik' Erarurdin, Insane Architect has drowned.
```

Gods damn it, I keep assigning walls to be built next to bridges without support. You'd think the workers would've learned by now. Two dwarves fell from the scaffolding and drowned in the one section of water they couldn't escape from. We have since dug ramps on the shore and placed their memorials there on the stone. Rest in peace, boozedwarf and Draconik.

```
Besmar Nomalastesh has become a Stray Cat.
There is nothing to catch in the western swamps. 12th Opal
Besmar Nomalastesh, Stray Cat (Tame) has been struck down.
```

Elderont's complained about the new meat we're giving him. Says it's too stringy, wants to know where it came from. I know he's friends with that maddwarf Ledi, and I may have to confine him to his still if he continues to act as a sympathizer.

As for the Cat Lady, well... she's quite talented. I do hope nothing happens to her, honest.

```
#adamantine statue of dwarves#

This is a masterful adamantine statue of dwarves created by 'Ledi IV' Tenshedkel.

The item is a masterfully designed image of dwarves in adamantine by 'Ledi IV'

Tenshedkel.
```

Andreus' Tale

From the depths of dreams, Andreus followed a familiar flow of shapes and lights to his destination. *Mortality had driven Lur to delirium,* Andreus mused. *The rambling made too little sense. Too many inconsistencies. But truth was in there. Where must be confirmed.*

For the first time in over thirty years, his astral form now stood before the iron doors of the Library, rusted and ruined amidst the cracked and crumbling walls. The once peaceful and starry sky here was laden with greenish cracks and shadowy vortices sucking away the vibrance that once danced along the Library's walls, leaving them bleak and lifeless.

The door was unlocked this time, and he stepped inside. Darkness had overwhelmed the place now that torches now longer blazed in chandeliers that once hovered the countless shelves but had crashed into golden slag upon the floor.

Andreus nervously made his way inside. The old desk was inaccessible through the twisted metal rubble, but the section he needed was thankfully there at the fore of the many, many books in the section labelled *001*.

Addoredir... Agakthoth... Aluonra.

He lifted the thick metal tome from the shelf and pried it open. A hollow chorus of wails rose from the ash-covered words and faded away.

Flipping hurriedly through the pages, he lamented lacking the time to study the secrets of this invaluable book, but time was precious and the entire astral realm felt wholly unsafe as it was. He was unsure what would happen if his current form was destroyed, if such a thing was possible.

Finding the proper year, Andreus scrolled his eyes through the text, and gasped. "It is true," he whispered.

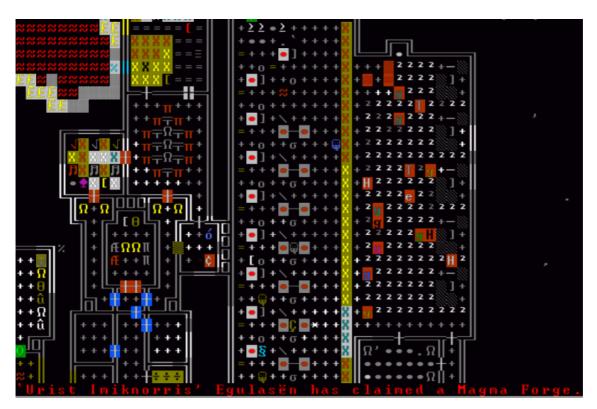
In the early spring of 501, the human queen Led Shakeoars performed the secret ritual of The Crypts of Flickering.

In the early spring of 501, the goddess Ura manifested as a skeletal human in the Plains of Ooze.

Journal of 'Seth' Evonoltar, Overseer of Failcannon, excerpts

```
Announcement Date: 12th Obsidian,
                       (30) has
has been
           nickel
                  Bin
                                 been completed.
 onstruct
                                 struck down
    Stray
                               been struck down.
              Nakasrigòth has created a
       Nokgolendok has become
                                   Farmer
                       has
                           created
                         has
                              created
                                    a
                                       maste
```

Within the greatest tragedies lay seeds of great success. These dwarves, those who've survived unbelievable peril or braved stories of them to embark here, they're among the hardiest, most talented dwarves I've ever seen. Our crafters are adept if not far greater. Our soldiers are brave and well-armed, if unskilled. **Our dining room is AMAZING** with sixty gold and silver tables each. That last bit will have to change if we ever want the population to say, be miserable for longer than the time it takes them to eat and become completely ecstatic over the death of their lover.



The High Master Weaponsmith that migrated here recently has claimed a Magma Forge and gathered several wafers of adamantine, but he seems to want some kind of cloth we can't provide. We'll start the looms up once the WEAPON is complete.

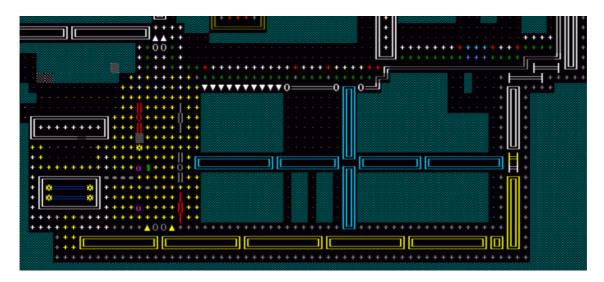
```
Announcement Date: 4th Obsidian, 533
A masterwork of `Elderont' Medenkib Ron Kuthdêng has been lost!
A masterwork of `Elderont' Medenkib Ron Kuthdêng has been lost!
A masterwork of `Elderont' Medenkib Ron Kuthdêng has been lost!
```

Oh my, was Elderont pissed that his roasted seeds were left out to rot in the kitchen. Seems we've run out of barrels, so I'm ordering 90 barrels of pure silver to be made. We can always melt them down when we must, and with tons of native silver here, I doubt the need will arise.

```
'Zeocin' Nåzomnomal. Animal Trainer has died from thirst.
Announcement Date: 28th Obsidian, 533
```

No one's heard from Zeocin in some time. They say he went off to build a wall near the underground reactor and was never heard from again. Are the murders not behind us by now?

In happier news, with the coming of the New Year we are ready to begin testing of F.A.I.L.S.

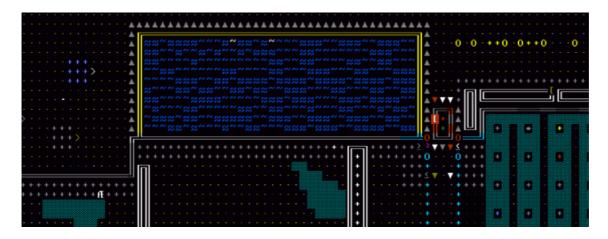


The Failcannon Automated Inderdictive Landflood System: Four pumps, dozens of silver and golden bridges channeling seawater into a holding tank at the front of our fort. Windmills provide constant power, while a water intake valve is controlled by a lever in the western courtyard, so that the machine can be switched on and off at will. Valves at the tank and along the aqueduct stand ready to release the water at a moment's notice.

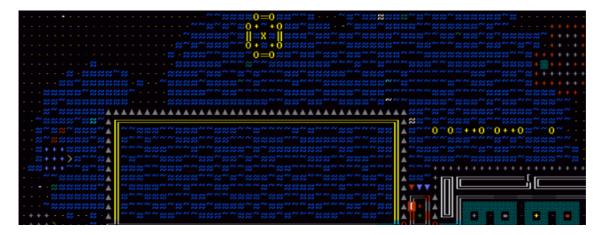


Try and get to us now, filthy skorses! Actually, don't. Skeletal horses can swim, can't they?

Well, whatever. PULL THE LEVER!



The holding tank is filled. I love the smell of cat piss in the morning.



Mwahahaha. MWAHAHAHAHANOTHING CAN STOP US NOW!



YES. YES DROWN> DROWN EVERYTHING

Ahem. Testing of **F.A.I.L.S.** concluded successfully. We're proceeding to Step 2 of the defense grid. It's only the beginning of our crusade for perfect safety, but we've lain the groundwork for the future. There should be magma, and poison tanks as well. And spikes in the field. With lye. And some lignite scattered about the sand. Nothing like a nice unquenchable coal fire on the beach. Warms those chilly bones.

1st Granite

Nearly a year has passed since I began working as Failcannon's Overseer. We've come a long way, but much work needs to be done. Just this morning I had to stop several dwarves from destroying the coffins of babies to smash up their bones. Some kind of perverse annual holiday, it seems. I shudder to think of what happened in the days preceding my arrival last year.

Despite all the calamitous deaths, there are sixty-eight of us here, one less than the same number as when I arrived. I call that just about breaking even. It'll be sixty-seven soon enough, as despite the work of our weavers, Urist still hasn't found the cloth he needs and is starting to get that crazy look in his eye. Sixty-six if Little McArthur dies. Sixty-five should the cat-loving blacksmith somehow mysteriously find herself surrounded by magma in her own home. Not that such a thing could ever happen.

New construction is underway and the place is starting to resemble a habitable, well-ordered home. If we keep this up, the Queen herself may decide to pay a visit. Perhaps an extended one, should

trouble in Graspedseduce be as great as I hear it is.

Dastot Cog has lost much blood to the Plains of Ooze. Let's hope it was all spilled for a reason. Soon no outside force shall be able to threaten us. Failcannon is safe, perfectly safe.

```
The Forgotten Beast Ceta has come! A great scaly ant. It has thin wings of stretched skin and it squirms and fidgets. Its cerulean scales are jagged and close-set. Beware its noxious secretions!
```

Safe.

Meanwhile

"Glacial."

"You're back!"

"The sunshine, Glacial."

"Did you find Lur?"

"No. Only a very old enemy. She's planned this for eons, and now, something, abominable, spreads at her command. Something once held in stasis, unchained."

"What is it?"

"It isn't."

Journal of 'Seth' Evonoltar, Overseer of Failcannon, excerpts

On the evening of Granite 1 I met with Dariush III in his temporary office, where he's still resting his injured legs. The diplomat from Graspedseduce has stood by his side every day for months now, but as far as I know they haven't actually begun official meetings. Dariush still claims to be unable to speak officially due to his "rest." One wonders what they've been up to this whole time.

```
The Health of 'Dariush III' Bermesir, Awesome Sold
In Traction Treatment History

529: Evaluated
- 'Oglokoog' Limulkab, Trader

529: Cleaned
- 'Oglokoog' Limulkab, Trader

529: Rotten tissue excised from left foot
```

Reports are coming in that our most recent wood mining efforts were interrupted by some slimy winged ant that nearly stole off with Ahrimahn and several other woodcutters. Lucky for them LAAT was there since he's the only one there who remembered holding an axe.



Quick, clean and efficient. LAAT is truly my kind of mechanic. If the beast managed to get any of that slime anywhere, we haven't been able to find it.

The weavers are yet to fully discern the type of cloth Urist needs. He's starting to shout louder at his workshop and I'm concerned he'll snap any day now. Turns out he's the cousin of Uristein, who suggested he might be after something called "wool," from a "sheep," if I'm spelling right. Some kind of furry monster from the Eastern Lands. Since the chances of us getting this sheep here in time are about zero, we'll need to think of another solution. I tried getting one of the farmers to shave a captive troll.

'Poet' Kolothil. Farmer cancels Shear Creature: No

He wasn't having that, so it's back to the drawing board.



The masons still haven't built that wall, but they shot down another repugnant monster. Gods only know what it was before they mangled it. No matter. We'll never need to farm for food again at this rate.

It was sometime around midnight when breadbocks decided to take her daughter outside on a mission to claim a certain article of footwear from the clutches of the soggy beach. Nobody realized where she'd went until her screams carried over the walls.



By the time ElementalWind got there to smash up the horse from behind, the skorse was desperately kicking at breadbocks' head, trying to cave her skull in despite the adamantine helmet protecting her.

I stood there as breadbocks was carried away to the overcrowded hospital. Staring at the strands of horse hair scattered across the sands where that tempting sock lay, I was struck by an idea. Horse hair is thick and sturdy. Sturdy enough to weave. We'll find out. We might be able to coax Urist away from madness with the promise of new materials. Uristein says that wool is just a certain sort of animal hair, so when we give his cousin this "wool" he'd better accept it, or it's Cage Traps all the way down the magma sea.

1: Get horse hair

The Recruit strikes The Zombie Horse in the tail with her (willow crutch), bruising the muscle!

2: Weave horse hair



3: ????

```
adamantine wafers TSK
*rope reed fiber cloth* TSK
granite TSK
cat leather TSK
horse hair cloth TSK
smoky quartzes TSK
```

4: FUCK



I can't fight this thing! Uh... by myself! what the hell even is that thing?



Oh gods, oh holy schist we're all done fo-- I mean, don't just stand there, lads! Have at the monster! You have weapons, use them!

```
the Forgotten Beast Kulur Usureb Tegasmomper is fighting!
the Wrestler 'Robocorn' Ushulaban is fighting!
```

I SAID USE THEM NOT DROP THEM

```
The Forgotten Beast shakes The Wrestler around by the right lower arm and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The right lower arm is ripped away and remains in The Forgotten Beast's
```

Damn it, Robocorn. You said you wanted more out of life than cheese! Was the adamantine battle axe not a part of that plan?

```
The Wrestler stands up.
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast stings The Wrestler in the right foot, tearing apart
the muscle through the -naked mole dog leather low boot-!
An artery has been opened by the attack and a motor nerve has been
severed!
Forgotten beast extract is injected into the The Wrestler's dwarf blood!
The Forgotten Beast collides with The Wrestler!
The Wrestler is knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Forgotten Beast kicks The Wrestler in the left lower leg with its
left rear foot, shattering the bone through the Egoblin bone leggings!
```

He's melting all over the hall! Why aren't you people helping him?! Help, someone!



Reinforcements! Let us avenge our fallen comrade!



Ha, that's it! Teamwork! There's nothing it can't solve! Aside from bringing Robocorn back from the dead, I guess. But still, by working together, we can certainly mop up his remains.

```
The Kills of 'Thatdude' Rûldodók Niralsil Zanor

Six Kills

ûsbu Maliceyawn the goblin, d. 533

Stozu Thiefdungeons the goblin, d. 533
Usasp Creviceled the forgotten beast, d. 533
Hu Enterscorpion the goblin, d. 533
Smunstu Poisonbands the goblin, d. 533
Kulur Hollowpebble the Washed Servant the forgotten beast, d. 534
```

Don't look at me that way, Thatdude. I had your back the whole time!

```
The Skeletal Horse kicks The Bone Carver in the left lower arm with her left front hoof, shattering the bone through the \( \) pig tail fiber cloaks! The Skeletal Horse kicks The Bone Carver in the right foot with her right rear hoof, bruising the muscle through the -elk bird leather low boot-! The Skeletal Horse kicks The Bone Carver in the left lower arm with her right rear hoof, shattering the bone through the \( \) pig tail fiber cloaks!! The Skeletal Horse kicks The Bone Carver in the right lower arm with her left front hoof, bruising the muscle through the \( \) pig tail fiber cloaks!! The Skeletal Horse kicks The Bone Carver in the left lower arm with her right rear hoof, bruising the muscle through the \( \) pig tail fiber cloaks!! Oberm' Sibrekasteb, Bone Carver has suffocated.
```

Little over a week into Granite and already we've lost too many. Skorses murdered a dabbling Mason building the eastern water containment wall. It seems they're learning how to bypass the helmet to kill us, as Derm's twisted spine would suggest. Rest in peace, good Bone Carver. You died most poetically.

```
10th Granite, 534

→the The Troubleshooter 'That Aussie Dwarf'

the Skeletal Horse Rodertotmon is fighting!
```

The following morning, That Aussie Dwarf braved the beach to recover Derm's body. May he have better luck.

```
Extreme Pain
Ability to stand lost
```

I don't get it. They're nothing but skin and bones and sinew, people! They can't be that tough.

```
The Skeletal Horse kicks The Ihe Troubleshooter in the right foot with her right front hoof, shattering the bone!

The PAINBRINGER hacks The Skeletal Horse in the upper body from behind with her *adamantine battle axe*, tearing apart the muscle and shattering the left true rib!

A tendon in the left true rib has been torn!

The Skeletal Horse kicks The The Troubleshooter in the head with her right front hoof, bruising the muscle and shattering the skull through the x(caue spider silk hood)x!

The PAINBRINGER strikes The Skeletal Horse in the tooth from behind with the pommel of her *adamantine battle axe* and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The Skeletal Horse charges at The PAINBRINGER!

The Skeletal Horse slams into an obstacle and falls over!
```

Megaman finally brought down the creature from behind while it gave That Aussie Dwarf a few reasons never to leave bed again. It's great how new migrants get here and see one out of five people missing limbs or in casts. Makes me wonder about what they're telling the Mountainhome, so I'll need to collect the letters and burn them before this year's caravan. I doubt the Queen would come to a "cursed death trap" as I hear the rabble put it, no matter how bad the Capital got.

```
'Megaman3321' Desisshorast

Ngokang Spideryseduce the goblin, d. 533
Bosa Zealbad the goblin, d. 533
Baldflower the skeletal horse
```

This skeletal horse business would never have happened if Tupu was at his post as ordered, but I suppose even Champions need to eat every once in a while.

'Tupu' Ostral Katthir Dumat, Champion Get Provisions

Granite 13

```
The Champion bashes The Skeletal Horse in the right rear leg with his wsilver war hammer*, chipping the bone!
The Champion bashes The Skeletal Horse in the lover body with his wsilver war hammer*, bruising the muscle!
```

Tupu has returned to his guard post. I don't know how he manages to use his gear without a working grasp, but this is Tupu we're talking about. If he lacked that last feeble arm he'd probably wield the hammer in his teeth.

```
butcherable unrotten nearby item. 16th Granite
ùshrir Angenmomuz has become a Stray Kitten.
```

I don't know what the foodies are on about. I see plenty of butcherable material scampering around now that Derm isn't feeding it.

Granite 22

```
'Mountain-King' Kilrudlensham, Soap Maker is throwing a tantrum!
```

Some Soap Maker barged into my office screaming his beard off about the draft and something about "extreme negligence." I told him to go bother Dariush in his infirmary office, I'm sure the Mayor could use some company.

Granite 23

Uristein's cousin finally began forging his master work. With our luck it'll be a mace, or maybe a blowgun. I would personally appreciate a scimitar, so I know for certain that's not what it's going to be.

Granite 24

```
'Ledi IV' Tenshedkel, Crazy Cat Lady is throwing a tantrum!
'Ledi IV' Tenshedkel, Crazy Cat Lady cancels Smelt native sil
Throwing tantrum.
'Grath' Tomêmurdim, Arrow-Catcher is throwing a tantrum!
'Grath' Tomêmurdim, Arrow-Catcher cancels Store Item in Bin:
tantrum.
'Grov' Avuzocîg, Alchemist cancels Weave Yarn into Cloth: Nee
collected yarn thread.
'Takua' Erushstukón, The Chronicler is throwing a tantrum!
```

This is so typical. The workers are going on strike demanding safer working conditions and better quarters. The Cat Lady seems to be the ringleader, I'm watching her. At least four dwarves are refusing to work in their rage but no one's turned violent so far. A road-in-progress was uprooted by someone the other day. Can one be charged for vandalizing something that hasn't been built yet? I'll need to ask Aik, the interim Captain of the Guard in the stead of the late boozedwarf. The fact that I closed the dining room for renovations gives no one the right to wreck the place.

Granite 28



Well now! Urist finished working and wears the widest smirk I've ever seen on a dwarf. Let's see what he's come up with.

```
Kasbenodroz Dumat Orrun, "Tuftedfatal the Roughness of Roaring", a adamant

Ihis is a adamantine spear. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encircled with bands of adamantine and rope reed fiber. This object menaces with spikes of cat leather, horse hair, smoky quartz and tube agate.

On the item is an image of Otik the Blueness of Flickers, the deity of games and the dawn, depicted as a male dwarf and two dwarves in granite. The two dwarves are prostrating themselves before Otik the Blueness of Flickers.

On the item is an image of three cows in cave spider silk.

Basic Value: 102000%
```

An incredible spear bearing a remarkable image. Two dwarves kneeling before Otik, and three haunting cows of silk that stare into your very soul. What could it all symbolize?

Urist's weapon is a fine end to a long month. Since he made it, he gets to use it. Not on any of us, I hope, but for now, Urist is easily the happiest dwarf in the fort so there's little danger of that. We've seen a rough and tumble start to the year, but in time I'm sure things will level out. I was a bit harsh on my comrades in previous entries. I know the workers have some valid concerns, and they need to blow off some steam. And I'm alright with that, as long as they stay away from **F.A.I.L.S.**, I don't care what they do.

Bridge destroyed by 'Mountain-King' Kilrudlensham

Ohhhh, Mountain-King. You shouldn't have done that.

Meanwhile...



Journal of 'Seth' Evonoltar, Overseer of Failcannon, excerpts

Felsite 1

I tried my best not to appear completely disinterested in the dwarf urgently pacing my office. I tried getting rid of him politely by citing priorities. "The military's quite busy right now with the unrest, you know. I don't think any more can be spared for trifling matters."

"It is vitally important that we retake that house," said the dwarf, who called himself Andreus XI. Eleventh what, I wondered.

"Why?"

"You wouldn't believe me if I told you."

"That's probably true."

"Look," said the dwarf. "There's a corpse in there, that used to belong Lur Thiefwitch, who was made mortal by the other gods as punishment for allowing me back to this world before the foundation of Battlefailed, where the Lady of Death followed through the summons this loophole of physics allotted by her servant Queen Led, who's building the strength of her goddess, by harvesting souls that can't escape to the afterlife due to the cosmic turmoil, freeing up bodies and putting Death in a better position for the war that will come to the gods when probability collapses, as a result of the dark Lady calling the Shadow into the worlds she's inhabited to undermine the divine cosmic law, and corrupt the rule of coherent reality."

I stared at him for a long time. He didn't seem dangerous, but I stretched a few fingers toward the axe out of sheer reflex.

"I need to get into the house, to try calling Lur's ghost back to our world with a magical chain," he said. "The house itself abides near the Ocean of Slime. It might be a nexus of worlds from where the undead beasts originate. The laws of reality are strangely interpreted there."

"You superstitious types are all the same," I shook my head. "Always a problem with some god and the end of the world just lurking around the corner. You realize how mad that nonsense sounds, don't you?"

"It's true, at least simply. It's the reason for the skeletal animals, the ghosts, the strange beasts in the caves, and the darkness of our sky. It explains the horrible night creatures sighted all through the land. The worlds are colliding together. Reality is unraveling!"

"Perhaps the Great Toad of Worlds simply got bored and decided to screw with us."

"Now who's talking nonsense?"

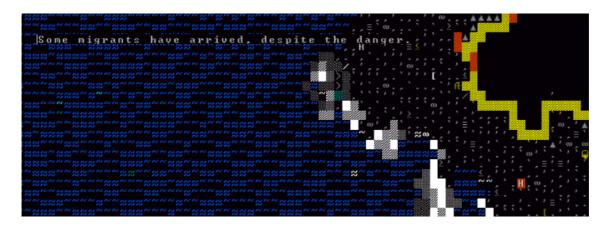
"All right then, let's say all this is true. How could you possibly know all of it?"

"I read a reliable book, but what's important right now is the house. Lur Thiefwitch knows what is needed to fend off oblivion. He must."

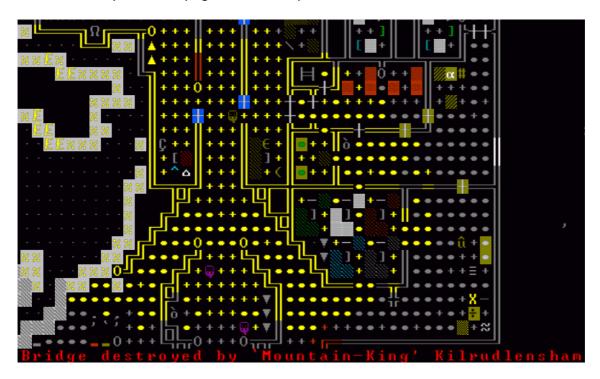
"I'm sorry," I said to the dwarf. "I know you may believe in all this, but I can't risk the soldier's lives on some mad religious quest. I've a fortress to manage, you'll have to excuse me."

"There's more at stake here than one fortress!" he began, but I'd heard enough by then and was on my way out the door. A wise leader chooses the battles.

So. Ledi Tedshedkel. Known cat sympathizer and implicated leader of the revolt. I knew she'd be trouble one day. I have stationed Aik in the forge to confront any further trouble developing there, and ordered her to wield the adamantine hammer for the duration of these temper tantrums. I want to discipline the dissenters, not destroy them, and the hammer will keep injuries to a minimum while still posing a threat to any small four-legged pets that happen get in the way.



Lookouts spotted a couple of drunks to the east fleeing in terror from skorses. I guess they live here now. Tupu killed the lot of bony beasts as our two newest recruits, Kaamanen and Karakzon, entered into their new home and wooden breastplates. On a related note, we really need to start melting those bronze toys we have lying around the Depot.



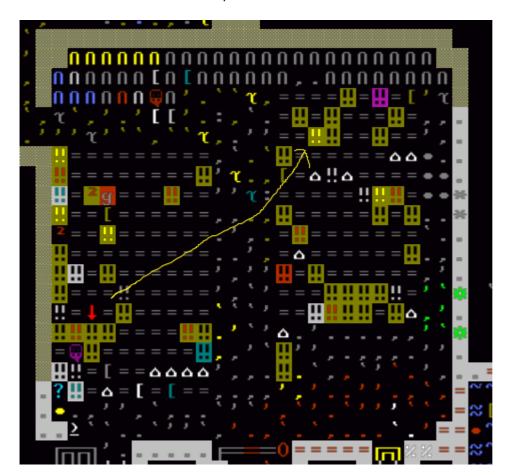
Another flagrant act of building destruction has taken place, this time in the upper surface level. When I get my hands on the person responsible I will take theirs away along with the ability to stand without assistance. We spent a year building all these bridges, confound it!

mayor 'Andreus XI' Nishmusöd, Ageles[REQUIRE]

The mayoral campaigns have ended. I cannot believe that weirdo actually bested Dariush in the latest election. Still, the laws the law, and I suppose the soldiers will be heading to that house any day now that Andreus can order them. I could order them not to if I *really* wanted to, but, eh. Should make a good show.

```
ushrir Angenmomuz, Stray Cat (Tame) has been struck down.
'Vee' Bermuthir has become a Animal Dissector.
'Mipe' Lulârgeshud Zulashemenkun Uzol has become a Gem Setter.
'Poet' Kolothil has become a Weaver.
'CatalystParadox' Kinrimtar, Animal Dissector is throwing a tantrum 'CatalystParadox' Kinrimtar, Animal Dissector cancels Store Item in Stockpile: Throwing tantrum.
'CatalystParadox' Kinrimtar, Animal Dissector cancels Beat Criminal
```

Some of the less satisfied soldiers joined with the defectors. CatalystParadox is refusing to safeguard the protesters. For this he himself will be safeguarded, preferably by way of a silver war hammer. I'll see if we can tack vandalism on top of his insubordination.



Not without just cause, actually. Instead of tending to the mad adamantine-throwing cat lover as requested, he's in the memorial hall tossing metal cages and making an obnoxious scene for the mourners. I'm glad the cage didn't hit any of the nearby children, since there was a HORSE inside and the hospital's got enough kids as it is.

```
'CatalystParadox' Kinrintar, Animal Dissector cancels Beat Criminal:
Throwing tantrum.

x12
Led Vukcasiden, Blacksmith is throwing a tantrum!
```

Ledi's instigating the other smiths, I just know she is. We've got to get her to a cell before she does any more damage. Unsafe working conditions my beard. The workers were far safer before they started trouble.

What a long day.

Felsite 2

boozedwarf shot Xellas the Doctor Mechanic in full view of the children, and while the resulting wound was minor but the incident demonstrates the chaos descending down on us. The Captain of the Guard were fitted with only non-lethal weapons to minimize the impact of our effort to instill order. Let's hope this ends quickly and quietly.

arcangelsd has the right idea, we can make pamphlets to attract the migrants. "Come to Failcannon, where every day alive is an adventure!" It wouldn't be all that much lying.

Felsite 5

```
Led Vukcasiden, Blacksmith has calmed down.
'Andreus XI' Nishmusöd, Ageless Wizard has mandated
certain goods.
```

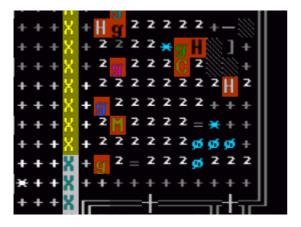
The crackpot mayor is comfortable in his new position and issued a very reasonable mandate for someone with such screwy mental mechanisms.

```
Mandates: Make battle axes (1/1)
```

I'm glad there's one thing we can both agree on. With all the people howling in the halls all the time now, I'd want an axe too, if I didn't already carry one.

```
'Painiac' Bërûlvucar, Farmer is throwing a tantrum!
'Painiac' Bërûlvucar, Farmer cancels Extract Metal Strands tantrum.
Craftsdwarf's Workshop toppled by 'Painiac' Bërûlvucar, Fa
```

The only strand extractor we have working destroyed his workshop in a fit of rage and fled the scene. He hasn't been sighted by anyone since. This place is so vast and cryptic it takes forever to get anywhere or find anybody! It's enough to drive one mad, I tell you.



I suppose the Mayor's new axe will have to wait.

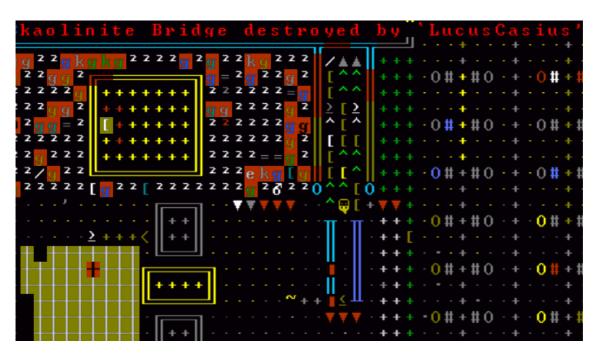
```
'Vee' Bermuthir, Soldier is throwing a tantrum!
'Vee' Bermuthir, Soldier cancels Beat Criminal:
```

Traitors, all of you! Sons of goblins all! You'll pay for this! Is there anyone out there still loyal to our effort?

```
'Urist Iniknorris' Egulasën has been ecstatic lately. He slept without a proper room recently. He admired a completely sublime Paved Road lately. He dined in a legendary dining room recently. He has been tired of drinking the same old booze lately. He is quite pleased with making an artifact. He was caught in the rain recently. He was disqusted by a miasma lately.
```

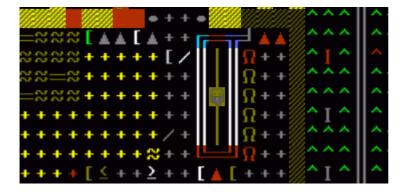
Good Urist is still a good guy. I'll have him make me a new axe while he's doing the Mayor's.

Felsite 7



The uprising continues to pick up momentum throughout the fort. Production has completely stalled out. The situation is intolerable. Today a smith named Lucus destroyed a bridge and fell on some

wooden spikes thoughtfully placed underneath. He's moderately injured and trapped with walls on every side.



Yet another example of the marvelous intellect these dwarves possess. Were they any more marvelous I would have remind them to eat when they're hungry and trapped in a room with "forbidden" food. I mean, even a dog would know better than that.



I despise this place.

```
'Little McArthur' Oltardakas, Child Tyrant is throwing a tantrum 'LucusCasius' íkthagdodók, Third Third Hand has calmed down. 'Elderont' Medenkib Ron Kuthdêng has created a masterpiece! 'Elth' Nokgolendok, Cheesemaker has calmed down. cobaltite Door destroyed by 'CatalystParadox' Kinrimtar, Animal
```

Our guards are the laziest I've ever seen. Why is CatalystParadox still walking free to destroy the memorial garden? Clearly I have to find someone happy and hence loyal enough to go and actually deal with him. Fortunately there are still some proud to call this place home.

```
'Deathsword' Asmelkir Medtobmes Enten has been ecstatic lately. He admired a completely sublime Paved Road lately. He was overjoyed to be able to give somebody water lately. He received water recently. He slept without a proper room recently. He talked with a friend lately. He admired a fine tastefully arranged Statue lately. He made a friend recently. He has been satisfied at work lately. He had a pretty decent drink lately. He was caught in the rain recently. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He worshipper of Lur Thiefwitch and a dubious worshipper of Lur Thiefwitch.
```

Deathsword isn't taking this crisis lying down, unlike some other soldiers. I'm looking at you, That Aussie Dwarf.

Felsite 8

I'm pleased to say that CatalystParadox has been permanently dealt with.

```
'CatalystParadox' Kinrimtar has been miserable lately. He sustained major injuries recently. He has complained about the draft lately. He enjoyed throwing something recently. He had a wonderful drink lately. He slept without a proper room recently. He had a fine drink lately. He has been satisfied at work lately. He dined in a great dining room recently. He had a nice bath recently. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He was caught in the rain recently. He admired a fine Door lately. He was beaten recently. His right lower arm is cut open. His right lower arm is running with 'CatalystParadox' Oakcastles's dwarf blood. His right lower leg is spraying 'CatalystParadox' Oakcastles's dwarf blood. His right hand is spraying 'CatalystParadox' Oakcastles's dwarf blood. His left lower arm is running with 'CatalystParadox' Oakcastles's dwarf blood. His left lower arm is running with 'CatalystParadox' Oakcastles's dwarf blood.
```

I'm less pleased to say that the guards used actual swords for their "beating." I'm mostly dismayed that some of the soldiers decided to use adamantine, and not in the form of a war hammer.

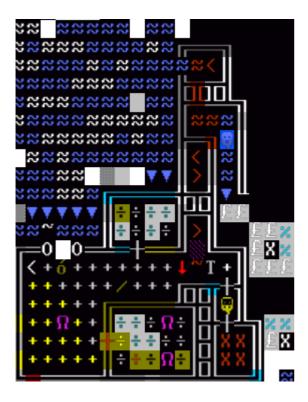


He bled to death in a bare stock room, and now dear Elderont has stopped working in support of the rioters. Shame on you, Elderont! Don't you know they're led by a mad dwarf out to force us to tolerate cats everywhere? Madness I say!

Felsite 10

Damn it all, Lucus! We just got done rebuilding it! Or will you persist until one of those spears finds a way through your head?

Felsite 11



At the height of our unrest, crazy Mayor What's-his-name ordered half the militia into LordSlowpoke's old house to find just whatever it was he wanted in there.

```
The flying (-horse bone bolt-) strikes The Forgotten Beast in the head, tearing the muscle and fracturing the skull!

The Forgotten Beast charges at The Doctor Mechanic!

The Forgotten Beast collides with The Doctor Mechanic!

The Forgotten Beast collides with The Doctor Mechanic!

The Forgotten Beast attacks The Doctor Mechanic but She scrambles away!
```

The battle is still going hours later. The monster forced Cheese into the depths of some cloudy stagnant water connected to Slowpoke's house. Last time we'll ever see Cheese, I would wager. Who knows what's waiting in that awful water for him. Tupu joined the fray sometime after and the two have combated since.



I'm told that during the battle, the Mayor tried to get into the house and past the beast through a door in the back of the house. I'm told that he did not succeed. I hope that chain or whatever's worth losing your head over. Rest in peace, you poor loon.

The Forgotten Beast scratches The Ageless Wizard in the head and the severed part sails off in an arc! 'Andreus XI' Nishmusöd, Ageless Wizard has been struck down.



Once the terrible lizard's rotting corpse was well on its way to the bone yard, the soldiers had a chance to investigate the house. Nothing out of the ordinary was found, just a few battered skeletons. No chain. Typical.



All and well I suppose the mission went, but one soldier is no longer with us. May your watery grave be a peaceful one, Cheese.

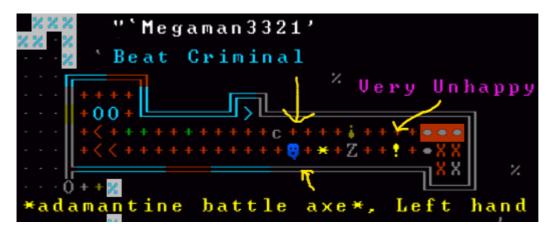


Felsite 12

```
The Soap Maker slashes The Furnace Operator in the upper lip with her *adamantine short sword*, tearing apart the muscle through the -pig tail fiber cloak-!

The Soap Maker stabs The Furnace Operator in the left upper leg with her *adamantine short sword*, bruising the fat through the *goblin bone leggings+!
```

That sneaky bandit Mountain-King is up to his (her?) old tricks, this time attacking an innocent Furnace Operator who refused to take part in the revolt. Megaman saw the assault taking place and rushed over to assist, but King took off like the venomous coward they are.



I cannot be blamed for the axe Mountain-King will be beaten with. There are plenty of jail cells open but it seems that with the Captain stationed at the gate the guards feel there's no need to actually use them.

```
The PAINBRINGER twists the embedded *adamantine battle axe* aroun Soap Maker's right lower arm!

The PAINBRINGER hacks The Soap Maker in the right hand with her *adamantine battle axe* and the severed part sails off in an arc! The PAINBRINGER hacks The Soap Maker in the right lower arm with *adamantine battle axe*, tearing apart the muscle through the \( \frac{1}{2} \) pifiber cloak \( \frac{1}{2} \)!

Many nerves have been severed!

The PAINBRINGER hacks The Soap Maker in the right lower arm with *adamantine battle axe* and the severed part sails off in an arc! The PAINBRINGER hacks The Soap Maker in the right upper leg with *adamantine battle axe*, tearing apart the muscle through the \( \frac{1}{2} \) pifiber cloak \( \frac{1}{2} \)!

An artery has been opened by the attack!

The PAINBRINGER hacks The Soap Maker in the lower body with her *adamantine battle axe* and the severed part sails off in an arc! Mountain-King' Kilrudlensham, Soap Maker has been struck down.
```

Mountain-King has been brought to justice. Rest in peace, you inconsiderate vandal.

Felsite 13

Security forces continue to deal with the dissidents.

```
captain of the guard stabs The Arrow-Catcher in the right hand with **adamantine short sword*, tearing apart the muscle through the x(pig fiber right mitten)x! rtery has been opened by the attack and a motor nerve has been red! **adamantine short sword* has lodged firmly in the wound!
```

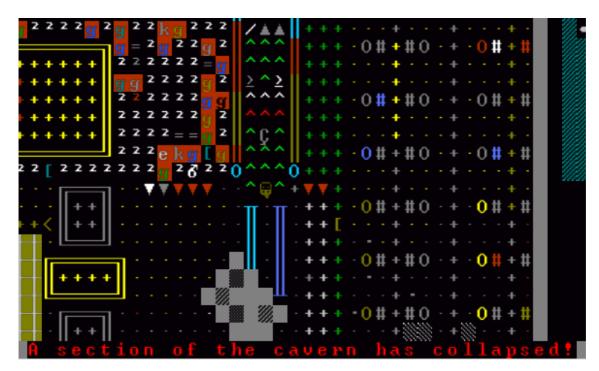
AIK! It's supposed to be a HAMMER! A puny one!

```
The Soldier stabs The Cheesemaker in the lover body with her =adamantine short sword=, bruising the fat through the *goblin bone leggings*!
The Cheesemaker loses hold of the XX(mule leather hood)XX.
The Cheesemaker loses hold of the XX(giant olm leather cap)XX.
The Soldier slashes The Cheesemaker in the head with her =adamantine short sword= and the severed part sails off in an arc!

'Elth' Nokgolendok, Cheesemaker has been struck down.
```

And WHY IS VEE helping you? He's not even in the fortress guard!

Oh wait, he's not helping, Vee's just bleeding crazy



WHAT ARE YOU DOING LUCUS

That makes three times! The hell have you got against kaolinite bridges? And how did you manage a cave-in?!

```
The Farmer's right ear takes the full force of t the cartilage through the XX(giant cave spider s The Farmer's left lower leg takes the full force shattering the ball force of the Farmer's upper spine force of muscle and tearing the spinning (last the full force of the spinning (last the spinning spinn
```

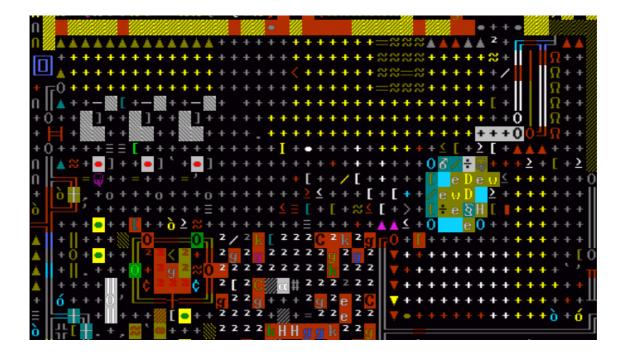
malkomk is as good as gone thanks to Lucus the barbarian vandal. This is why we punish building destruction! The farmer's blood is on the Third Third Hand's hands.



Oh great, just great, just when you think you have quite enough problems, the elves have to go and show up. I'm off to think of two reasons not to drown all of them before I do.

Felsite 15

A sorry bunch of smelly hippies merry troop of elvish traders came nervously, past the bleached bones of their own kind sticking out of the sand, to trade us more of that gnomeblight garbage and little else. In the interest of building our reputation for wealth I've decided not to feed them to the Ettin, but instead to use their help in removing some of our massive heap of trash.



Elves are deliciously stupid. Lucus was already sitting upon the Trade Depot with several mangled limbs thanks to the guards so I tried getting him to effect the trading, but found he was slightly too unconscious to barter effectively. Which, in this case, at first, amounted to pointing a weapon at the merchants and demanding all of the booze. I reconsidered. Elves have no real concept of garbage, see, which is great for us because we now have about a hundred fewer plain cloth bags clogging up our furniture stores and we got fifty sun berries out of the bargain. Maybe next year these unwashed heathens will bring us some better animals than the cows I intend to let starve.

Felsite 17

I need to discourage Mipe from killing any more recruits but it's really intimidating to talk to him, the way he plays with his knife while staring at you... I think I'll send that red-shirted dwarf to go do it, I hear he's a Competent Persuader.

```
The Dancing Dagger slash ({large steel dagger}) a
The Dancing Dagger stabs
({large steel dagger}),
through the +pig tail fi
The Fisherdwarf is havin
The Dancing Dagger stabs
steel dagger}), tearing
brain through the Epig t
A tendon in the skull ha
`boozedwarf' Ustuthnunùr
```

Ah, see? That's exactly what I was worried about.

Felsite 19

The ranks of the vandals are swelling. Ledi's minions continue their vicious attacks on the miners. DorvenEngineering was caught alone in the hall earlier and fled for his safety. And most dastardly, a silver road by our entrance was completely destroyed by a disgruntled soldier who refuses to answer any questi

```
Road destroyed by 'Grath' Tomêmurdim,

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```

One of these days, the halls will be quiet again. Until then I shall keep going to bed with the axe, which helps to stave off the nightmares.

Not sure why, it just does.

Felsite 21

```
The PAINBRINGER hacks The Metalsmith in the head with her *adamantine battle axe* and the severed part sails off in an arc! 'Zathel' Saziresesh, Metalsmith has been struck down.
```

I don't leave my room anymore. Not safe. Nowhere safe. No one safe. No one but Tupu. I trust Tupu because if Tupu wanted us dead we'd already be so. He brings me all the news from outside.

```
'breadbocks' Shedimudib, Brewer has succumbed to infection.
```

breadbocks succumbed to her injuries despite the Doctor's care. Baldflower gets the last laugh after all.

```
The Captain of the Guard slashes The Arrow-Catcher in the right lower leg with her *adamantine short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The Captain of the Guard punches The Arrow-Catcher in the left eyelid with her left hand, bruising the skin through the x(pig tail fiber cloak)x!

The Captain of the Guard slashes The Arrow-Catcher in the left foot with her *adamantine short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc!

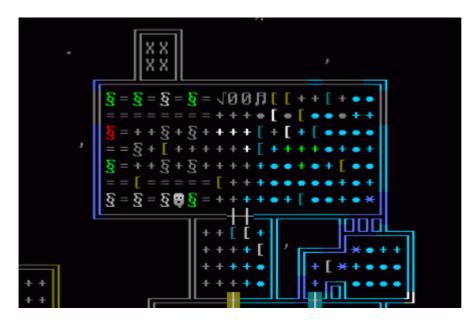
The Captain of the Guard stabs The Arrow-Catcher in the left upper leg with her *adamantine short sword*, bruising the fat through the \( \frac{1}{2}\)goblin bone leggings\( \frac{1}{2}\)!

The Captain of the Guard stabs The Arrow-Catcher in the right lower arm with her *adamantine short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc!

'Grath' Iomêmurdim, Arrow-Catcher has bled to death.
```

Oh good gods. Aik, seriously, drop the damn sword before the other guards find a tall tower to fling you from.

I don't get it. Why aren't they using the nice new prison? I know there's no food in there yet but it's perfectly suited for our current dilemma. Do they simply not care? Do they long for the chance to shed their fellows' blood?



Madness envelops me.

Felsite 23



I figured it out. This is Hell, and I'm here in Hell where dwarves fight to the death and the Diplomats go melancholy, never to return home. Whatever Dariush and he have been talking about in there all this time has eroded his mind and Queen Led's certain to hold us responsible. Nice going, Dariush.

Felsite 27

```
The Captain of the Guard slashes The Alchemist in the head with her *adamantine short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc! 'Grov' Avuzocîg, Alchemist has been struck down.

The Captain of the Guard stabs The Engraver in the head with her *adamantine short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc! 'HacDuggan' Anansodel, Engraver has been struck down.

**Adamantine short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc! 'HacDuggan' Anansodel, Engraver has been struck down.

**Adamantine short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc! 'HacDuggan' Anansodel, Engraver has been struck down.

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**Adamantine short sword* and the severed part sails off in an arc! 'HacDuggan' Anansodel, Engraver has been struck down.
```

NOBODY TOLD YOU TO USE A SWORD AIK, FIND THE GOD DAMN HAMMER AND USE IT

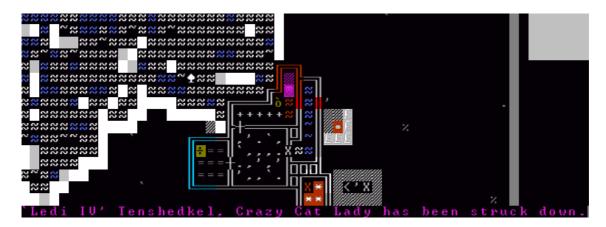
Aik is out of control. She just won't use the hammer, she just won't. Have I not even the slightest control left in this place?

This won't do. I have to show my face out there again. I have to let the dwarves know there still walks an actual leader here. The presence of law is not gone. I must emerge.

I believe I'll begin with the house by the Ocean of Slime. I want to know what the short-lived Mayor threw his life away for.

Felsite 28

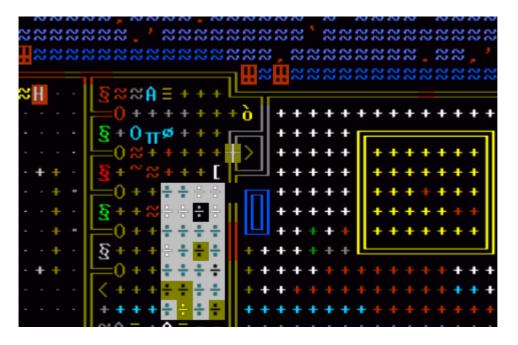
I'd just sent the guards to arrest the Cat Lady once and for all when I sought out LordSlowpoke's house deep within Failcannon and found just what the Mayor had desired there.



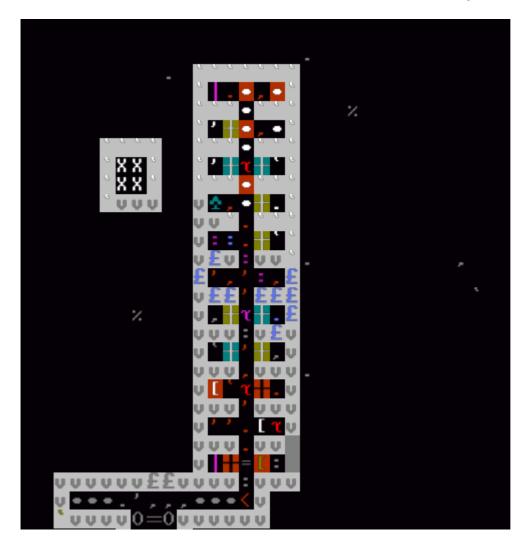
There in the caves before a vast ocean of poison sat a tall and lonely house, and in that mist-laden house and its blood-soaked floor was something I'd never seen before.

'Lur Thiefwitch, Likotost, Ghostly Dwarven God

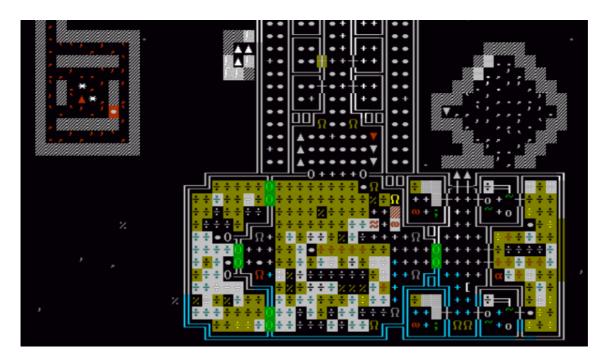
That's right, some ghost who thinks he's Lur Thiefwitch. I've seen everything, now.



Robocorn's Hall is overflowing with prepared food and enough plump helmets for sustainable farming. It can be sealed from within by the bridge, has a great bedroom, and the wall can be broken down and rebuilt to allow access to irrigated sand. The only drawback will be rebuilding that wall, and that can be done when the undead are elsewhere to minimize the danger.



The Tomb of LucusCasius has access to a strange muddied hallway with some underground trees and plants, while the tomb itself has a small stockpile of food and stone for building workshops. It wouldn't be an ideal situation but a survivable one. It looks like someone was prepared to be buried alive.



Finally there's the entirety of Lower Failcannon. That's where most of the prepared food is stored, and there are forges, beds, workshops and a dining hall. There's muddy ground thanks to the laboratory, access to water, and the whole place can be sealed off with a lead bridge, but its size makes it more difficult to filter in the dwarves we want to keep safe. It's also right next to the Ocean of Slime and the majority of Aluonra's FB population.

We have several options, and hopefully we don't have to take one yet. If it gets really bad we can always send dwarves to all the safe spots and wait out the trouble. Statistics say at least one of them should survive.

Whatever happens, *don't* rely on Tupu for a solo survival. He can't do civilian work anymore. I don't even know how he's still holding the hammer and shield, but he can't carve bones anymore.

The bronze chain I'd heard so much about was lying on the ground beneath the ghostly dwarf looking sadly about the small room in which his body lay.

"Yes?" he intoned as I entered the room. "What do you want?"

"I was curious. A dwarf named Andreus said you were the ghost of a god."

With bitter eyes, the ghost looked down at himself. "I am a mortal soul now," he said.

"But before?"

"Before I was Lur Thiefwitch, the Jealous God, the Spire of Zeal. But before no longer matters. There

is no after. Soon there will be no before. You and I shall meet in the oblivion after time in equal nothingness."

I nodded to myself. A forlorn haunt if I've ever seen one. They like to mope around their bodies and ruminate their past lives, and this one seems to have a bout of dementia to deal with. I tried to get more out of him but he is quite detached from rationality and so I left him to his quiet ramblings. He might be in there for a while, since we have to quarantine the area and I don't know when I'll get around to a memorial. There's just not enough time in a day.

1st Hematite

'Tale' Kabrovod, Hammerdwarf has succumbed to infection

The butcher with a fondness for tainted meat has died from fever, shocking many without a basic understanding of hygiene. We buried his body after dumping it a puddle of water outside to rinse off.

Most of the dwarves here are migrants from the past few years, according to these records. Very few dwarves live more than couple years at Failcannon, so there's a healthy mix of jaded dwarves who seen it all and the innocent waiting to be traumatized. By now the good soldiers are near fully desensitized to tragedy, and while a good portion of angry recruits remain, the in-fighting is good for a variety of combat skills to rise, and I hope that soon they won't be complaining about the draft anymore. Sparring, Battlefailed style.

At any rate, with some intentionally misdirecting orders I was able to trap Aik in a closet long enough to convince her to disarm. Failcannon falls quieter now that the disgruntled workers are either dead or hospitalized. Perturbed as I am by the sanguine methods employed by our security, they appear to have weeded discontent out of our ranks, for now, at least, and so we may return to our important work.

```
Sarvesh Idumril, Stray Cat (Tame) has been struck down.
The weather has cleared.
'Poet' Kolothil, Farmer cancels Process Plants: Taken by mood.
'Poet' Kolothil, Farmer is taken by a fey mood!

z: Zoom to location

Announcement Date: 1st Hematite
```

Poet has assumed the aspect of one fey, and was locked inside one of the cloth houses, where he's to stay until turning the entirety of that stockpile into whatever it is that he's making. Most fey dwarves stick with one or two pieces of their artifact's main component pieces, but not Poet: he's not allowed to! Whatever he's coming up with, he's officially mandated to make it as elaborate as dwarvenly possible.

```
Clothier's Shop *CLT*

pig tail fiber cloth TSK

pig tail fiber cloth* TSK

*rope reed fiber cloth* TSK

(rope reed fiber cloth) TSK

**Tope reed fiber cloth TSK

**Tope reed fib
```

And please Poet, nothing useless. If you waste all that cloth, you're Uristein's new assistant.

Hematite 3

Uristein reports a breakthrough in bone block making. By pulverizing the bones and using a cartilaginous plaster we are finally able to use our vast collection of skeletons for something besides decoration. Things may be taking a somewhat unorthodox turn here at Failcannon, but there's nothing macabre about using your resources, and if there's one thing we have in abundance, it's bones.

```
This is a elf bone blocks.
```

The possibilities are endless.

Hematite 9

Poet has finally finished gathering all the cloth in that tiny room so he was let out for some fresh air. He went to the surface and returned with the gargantuan bones of some creature we slaughtered a while ago. I still have no idea what he's making but it may turn out to be the most incredible bathrobe in all of history. I'm keeping those fingers crossed.



Hematite 16

Almost all of those wounded during the trouble are back on their feet, more or less. Our doctors must be exceptional, I've never seen a dwarf allowed to use an artifact crutch before. I think Greader may actually prefer it to his leg.

```
"'Greader' Bridgesplashes"

-green glass vial-, XX(giant cave spider silk (-bronze buckler-), Right hand Akuthshesam Nimemkekath, Right hand water covering (upper body) water covering (lower body) water covering (head) water covering (right upper arm) water covering (left upper arm)
```

The only people still showing their signs of unhappiness are the children who haven't any parents to keep them in line. Filthywalrus has been especially petulant since the passing of her mother. I've never had to console an orphan before so I'm rather hoping the problem disappears on its own.

Hematite 22

```
'Poet' Kolothil has begun a mysterious construction!
```

Hematite 24



Hematite 28

At last Poet unveiled his masterpiece. Let's see what he finally finished.

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: Here would be a series of images due to the planepacked bag that dwarf made. I didn't add those in order to preserve space and sanity. SethCreiyd was kind enough to add a description of it in his post.]

A pig tail fiber bag depicting much of the history of Dastog Cog's nobility leading up to the foundation of Failcannon. Notable images include the foundation of Battlefailed, the conquest of the goblins in

111, the first dwarven king of year 1, lots of renditions of Tuftedfatal the Roughness of Roaring the adamantine spear, the ascension of Queen Led, goblins falling to their death, dwarves dying of thirst, numerous renditions of the goddess Enshal, and pictures of various artifacts, including itself.

I dunno. It's a bit plain. Needs more cow bone.

Hematite 28

Goblin attack. Tupu has single-handedly dealt with a squad of archers and their trolls. Heh.

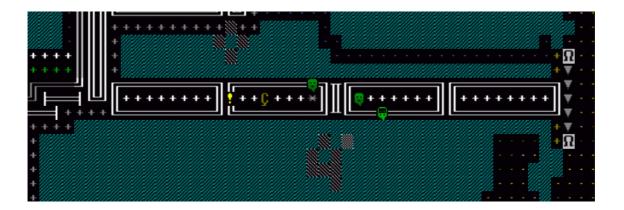
```
'Felcis' Ledrigòth, Maddwawrf has been struck down.
```

A toothless, jolly old maddwarf was killed by the bridge he was building outside. Rest in peace Felcis.



Other than this, Dete took an arrow to the left hand but it's just a flesh wound. There were no other casualties. Goblin corpses closest to the gate have been collected for block making. Goblins throw their dead up on pikes to scare off invaders, but here we are far more resourceful. We have a city to build!

Galena 2



With her mother and father both dead, Filthywalrus is considerably distressed and there's no one to look after her. Naturally she found her way to the upper level of the fort where the new trade access bridge is under construction.

The thing about bridges is that while they require less raw material than solid floors, they're also much easier to destroy, especially when you're the bulkiest three-year old this side of the Windy World. I sighed and prepared myself for the rebuilding of even more architecture and the engraving of several new headstones.

This time, however, the target was not the bridge, but Elderont, who was thrown and plummeted four stories into the reeking ocean and nearly drowned to death. He managed to crawl out of the water before passing out from a fractured wrist and was taken to the hospital where he's since remained. I tried building a kitchen in the hospital for him but there just isn't any room.

```
'Filthywalrus' Zulbanôm, Dwarven Child cancels Starting Fist Fight:
Target inaccessible.
```

It's only a matter of time before the guards come for Filthywalrus. I'll do what I can to protect her but the day will arrive. Luckily there are still many unclaimed coffins in the mortuary.

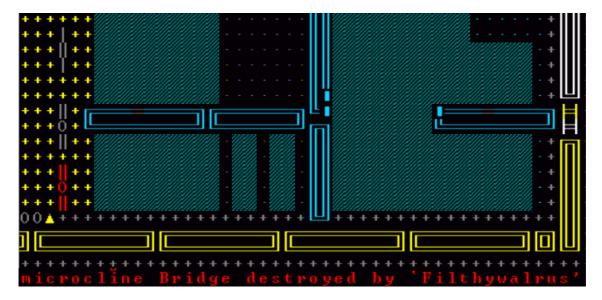
Galena 18

A human caravan pulled into our gates and unloaded their junk in the Depot. We'll purchase a variety of metals and gems in exchange for goblin clothes and wooden arrows. They're a different bunch of traders than last year's, I suppose that medicine was no help after all.

```
Merchants have arrived and are unloading their goods.
'LordSlowpoke' Tathzefon, Magnificent Bastard is throwing a tantrum
```

LordSlowpoke is unhappy to be locked out of her own quarters. She just doesn't understand the concept of "quarantine." I'd send her off the Diving Board a few times as a lesson in manners but kids never sit still long enough.

Galena 20



See? Filthywalrus destroyed a bridge! I knew I wasn't just being paranoid!



She fell in the same waters that claimed boozedwarf and Draconik last year while *building* that very bridge. The ramps we dug after that incident have saved the girl's life. They might appreciate knowing their deaths weren't completely in vain. Here is where I'd make a contemptous remark about Fate's sense of fun but I wouldn't want it proved correct.



Filthywalrus swam to the shore, drenched and smelly and angry, but alive. I decided to lock her outside for her own safety. There she can harm no one, and more importantly, no one can harm her, unless a sea monster comes out of the ocean or something, but no matter what horrors lay deep in the Blueness, until the Fortress Guard decides to make use of the pleasant new prison she's far better off staying put.

Sprout the Surgeon ended the day by shooting a few bolts at Filthywalrus' older sister Gilgameshclone in the memorial hall. The eight year old has lost full use of her arm, and was rescued by DorvenEngineering and Kaamanen, the latter of whom did the stitches. Normally that would be Sprout's job, but for some reason I don't really trust her near kids at the moment.

I miss the Sprout from six months ago, who would lovingly carve the rotting tissue from Gilgameshclone's bare, filthy feet. The Sprout here and now would probably hack at them until she found an artery. Isn't it amazing what time can do to a person?

Galena 21

You'll pay for this, LordSlowpoke!

```
The Magnificent Bastard attacks The Overseer but He scrambles at The Magnificent Bastard strikes at The Overseer but the shot is The Magnificent Bastard attacks The Overseer but He scrambles at The Magnificent Bastard attacks The Overseer but He rolls away! The Magnificent Bastard strikes at The Overseer but the shot is The Magnificent Bastard misses The Overseer! The Magnificent Bastard attacks The Overseer but He rolls away! The Magnificent Bastard attacks The Overseer but He scrambles at The Magnificent Bastard misses The Overseer! The Magnificent Bastard misses The Overseer! The Magnificent Bastard strikes at The Overseer but the shot is The Magnificent Bastard attacks The Overseer but He rolls away!
```

Sprout's daughter continues to act out. The plump helmet spawns not far from the field, it seems. It took all the willpower I have not to teach the little marauder why one does not punch the dwarf with an axe. Still, one has to applaud her daring. She'll make a fine villainess one day, if she somehow survives to adulthood.

Galena 24

Today I got some bad news.

Painiac lost his temper dealing with the greedy humans and decided one of them needed a bolt in the chest. Well, the other humans took this unkindly and the marksdwarf was soon full of arrows himself, and since no one was sure what was happening, the entire militia rushed to our trader's aid.

```
The Champion punches The Human Crossbowman in the left ear with his left hand, tearing apart the cartilage through the <<la>(large black bear leather cloak)?
```

From what I understand of the scuffle, Xenos lost a hand,

```
Human Pikeman stabs The Farmer in the right hand
```

but Tupu avenged her,

```
The Champion charges at The Human Pikeman!
The Human Pikeman looks surprised by the ferocity of The Champonslaught!
The Champion bashes The Human Pikeman in the head with his (*shammer*), bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the btearing the brain!
The Human Pikeman has been knocked unconscious!
The (*silver var hammer*) has lodged firmly in the vound!
The Champion collides with The Human Pikeman!
The Human Pikeman is knocked over!
```

Kaamanen got his first kill,

```
The Combat Surgeon hacks The Human Hammerman in the lower body from behind with his adamantine battle axe and the severed part sails off
```

Strategia improved her aim,

```
The flying (*goblin bone bolt*) strikes The Human Maceman body, tearing the muscle and tearing the heart through the reed fiber cloak):
A major artery in the heart has been opened by the attack!
```

and all the humans are dead, so yes, another fine day for foreign relations. I guess human bone blocks are on the menu. If any good came out of this disaster, it's that all of the soldiers are now ecstatic from the joyful slaughter and all just a bit closer to not caring about anything anymore.

This is how we train here at Failcannon. We don't need archery targets and Danger Rooms and other such frills. We just get into lots of fights and let the skills develop themselves. That's the thing about a place like this. Tupu is the prime example of what we're capable of. He's been here longer than almost any of us, has fought off goblins, monsters and the undead. Has survived unbelievable injury. Has endured much trauma and seen much death. And still he fights on, unfettered by circumstance. It would take the legions of the Underworld to stop him, and even they'd need earn their prize.

At a place like this, only the most exceptional people survive. If these folk live long enough to ever see Queen Led arrive, she'll be surrounded by the most vicious, bloodthirsty, hard-to-kill dwarves outside of a goblin tower, and many of them have a grudge against her. And she is not a spring chicken.

I doubt Queen Led will ever come here.

Galena 25

kaolinite Coffin destroyed by `LordSlowpoke'

For once LordSlowpoke, I agree with you. Mountain-King doesn't deserve such a nice coffin. This mess was all his fault to begin with. And Ledi's too. Which reminds me, I meant to find out if gabbro is magma-safe.

Galena 28

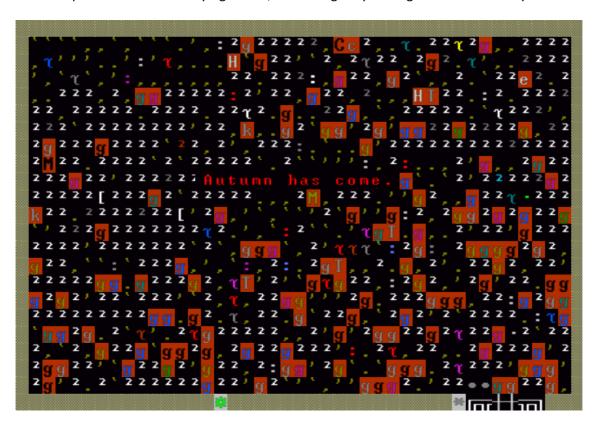
I passed a dead baby in the hall on my way to Lower Failcannon this morning. Grath was understandably unable to feed the child since her murder. The baby's father Elt was unable to feed the child on account of it being "not my bloody concern," as he put it.



They say you can judge the worth of a people by how they take care of their offspring. With this in mind I'm tempted to let the goblins take our last kids away in the hopes of providing them a better life. Anywhere, literally anywhere would be safer than here.



I want to pull that lever so badly right now, but the sign says I'll regret it. It could only add to the list.



Limestone 1

The Forgotten Beast Zumzust has come! A great three-eyed alligator. It has thin wings of stretched skin and it is ravening. Its mauve scales are jagged and set far apart. Beware its fire!

Woodcutters spotted a winged dragon down in the caverns today. We've sealed the gate indefinitely. Enough dwarves are dying without being lit on fire.

Limestone 3

Tongsoracle, the self-referential half-million dollar cloth bag, was placed atop the Third Hand's Tower as an offering to the gods. On paper, anyway. In practice it will be witnessed only by those charged with dropping goblins off the top, and it's only there for the time so it isn't stolen.

Limestone 5

A small band of migrants braved the bone-filled beach to join our cause, just in time to join our dwindling population before the dry season. NightmareBros, Mormota, Seraphim and Grov were handed their weapons and told to clean up some of our murder scenes. There was also a young furnace operator named Ledi V and wouldn't you know it, she has a cat. Fate continues to mock me.

Limestone 7

```
The Captain of the Guard strikes The Third Third Hand in the u with her (-«steel shield»-), bruising the muscle, jamming the rib through the heart and tearing apart the heart! A major artery in the heart has been opened by the attack! The (-«steel shield»-) has lodged firmly in the wound! LucusCasius' ikthagdodók, Third Third Hand has bled to death.
```

The Captain of the Guard is as persistent as she is violent! She found the Third Third Hand on the Depot and, though deprived of a true weapon, still managed to finish the job her guards started last month. At least Lucus finally paid for malkomk's death. Justice, as it were, has been served.

Aik is currently issued a fancy wooden elvenmake sword, and I'm happy to report she was seen using it. She hates it, but she's using it.

Limestone 15

'Gilgameshclone' Zesfikod has claimed a Craftsdwarf's Workshop.

Gilgameshclone emerged from the hospital mumbling to herself and brought a log of wood to a craftshop. I expect that whatever she creates will make good kindling for the dragon that's bound to find a way into the fortress some day.

Sandstone 8



Well, damn. Urist McLost died of thirst in the hospital. Looks like That Aussie Dwarf's gravy days are in danger. Sprout's normally the one feeding patients, but I guess she's too busy desecrating graves to be bothered with that, so... Poet! You like helping others, right? No? Well, everyone else is doing something, so guess what your new job is.

Sandstone 9

```
Tangakthestartunom, "The Spotted Crimson-Mortal", a goblin-cap harp

This is a goblin-cap harp. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is decorated with goblin-cap. This object menaces with spikes of spore tree.

Basic Value: 3600*
```

Gilgameshclone is now a legendary wood crafter thanks to her silly harp. She returned to the hospital quite pleased with hereself, and I admit it's nice to see a child smiling for a change.

Oh crap, that reminds me. Someone should check up on Filthywalrus.



Sandstone 15

Goblin thief came through the front gate today. The Dancing Dagger killed it and was bestowed an honourable title by his comrades.

```
'Mipe' Lulârgeshud Zulashemenkun Uzol, Dancing Dagger
"'Mipe' Rootedfortresses the Painful Strong-Cat of Oil
```

All Hail Dancing Dagger Mipe Rootedfortresses, The Painful Strong-Cat of Oil! My, does that bear repeating.

Sandstone 27

I can't take this place anymore! I'm losing my mind! These ingrates don't appreciate anything I've done to keep them safe! I need a better house! Why the HELL isn't the bridge finished yet?! I Arrgghgh!

```
'Seth' Evonoltar, Overseer is throwing a tantrum!'
'Seth' Evonoltar, Overseer has calmed down.
```

Damn it, Seth! Get a hold of yourself! Imagine if the cats saw this!

Timber 2

An argument broke out between Xellas and Kaamanen at the public well. One of them cut the line or something and before you know it Kaamanen has a broken hand and Xellas is now walking around with a pick in his chest. DuckThatQuacks chased off the mad doctor and brought Kaamanen to the infirmary, where Deathsword took his own turn beating the helpless Surgeon lying in his hospital bed. It's sad to see such a noble butcher of cats fall so sharply.

Timber 6

Deathsword was taken to prison early this morning. I'm happily amazed that it's finally going to use. I'm less happily amazed that Xellas still walks free.

Timber 13



Well isn't that something, I pulled this unlabelled lever in the main hall and a monster from the caverns appeared on the beach and killed TerrisH! Tupu took care of the great salt beast before it could murder again, but I mean, really. Who could be fiendish enough to install such a remarkably simple and twisted defensive device?

I put a label on the lever now that I know what it does. Learning is fun.

Timber 16



I don't get it. Deathsword was so happy a few months ago. What happened to him?

```
'Deathsword' Asmelkir Medtobmes Enten has been miserable lately. He was unable to find somebody in charge to cry on lately. He has been starving lately. He has been dehydrated lately. He has complained of hunger lately. He has lost a friend to tragedy recently. He has complained of thirst lately. He has been tired lately. He was forced to endure the decay of a friend. He had a pretty decent drink lately. He admired a fine Paved Road lately. He enjoyed starting a fist fight recently. He admired a fine tastefully arranged Door lately. He had a fine drink lately. He was caught in the rain recently. He is depressed about being confined.

He is a worshipper of Lur Thiefwitch and a dubious worshipper of Lur
```

Poor Butcher. He was always so loyal.

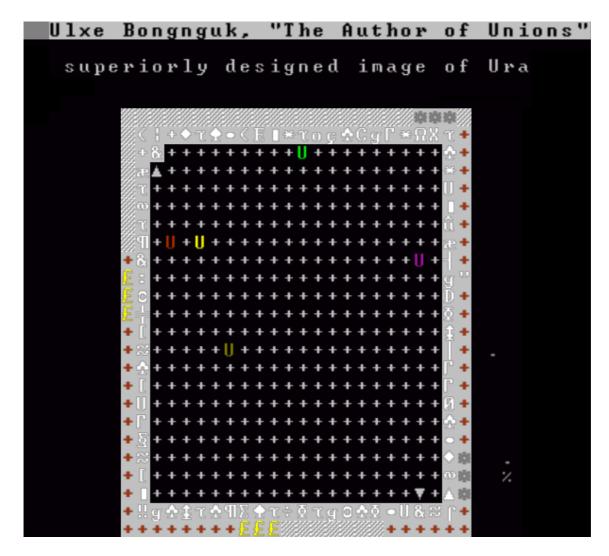
Meanwhile...



Far away in the Points of Grasping,

There are almost no supplies left, but with stout labor comes sustenance. Whether by bolt, plow or hook, provide for your dwarves. You are expecting a supply caravan just before winter entombs you, but it is Spring now. Enough time to delve secure lodgings, ere the <u>beasts</u> get hungry. A new chapter of dwarven history begins here at this place, Gidthurgenlath, "Graspedseduce". Strike the earth!

in the ancient city of Graspedseduce, the dwarves arise from oppression:



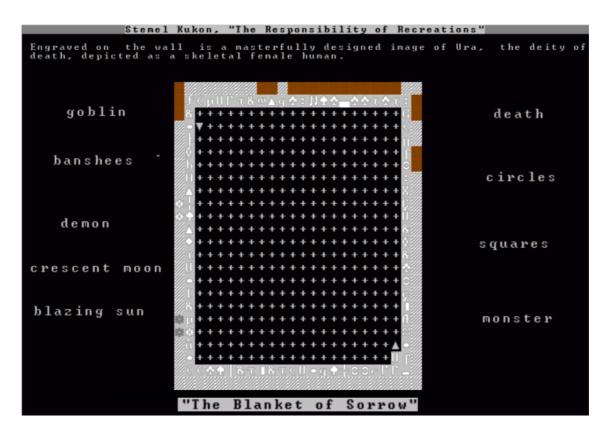
The clashing of swords and roaring of combat leaked through the marble walls of the Great Temple of the Order of Death, where Queen Led Shakeoars and her most trusted aides were holed up in shelter against the chaos outside. The dwarven rebels had marched on the capital, and Graspedseduce was burning.

"The dwarves have taken the last tower, Majesty! It's only a matter of time before they breach the Temple!"

Despite what should have been dire news, Led Shakeoars continued to smile her thin lips beneath the oversized hood of her robe.

"Your Majesty!"

"Ushat," she addressed her priest in a crackling voice. "Only Death may breach her Temple."



"They will arrive any moment!"

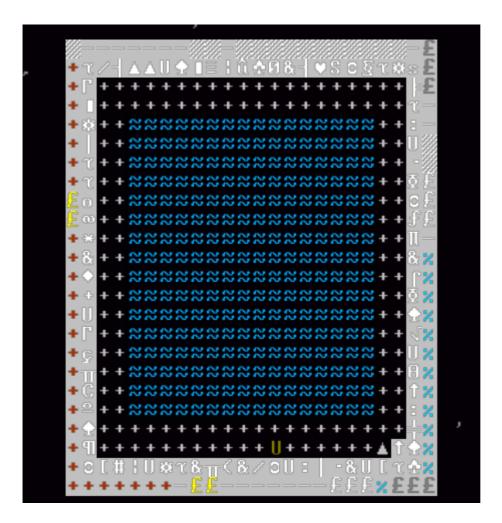
There was a flash in the Queen's weary eyes. "As the day comes to pass, this rebellion will be over. Soon my reign will be sealed."

"But your Majesty-"

"Silence, worm. Is the offering prepared?"

"Yes, but-"

"Then bring it below."



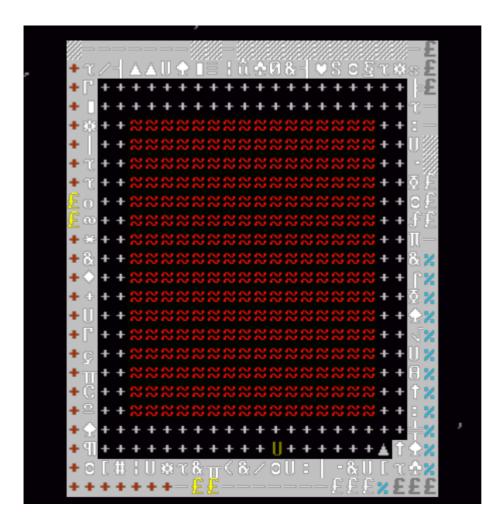
The old man set the foul-smelling barrel down beside a pool of crystalline water. Engravings of death and demons from ancient tales stared down at him accusingly. Not for the first time in his service to the Queen, the old man felt uncertain. He stared straight ahead across the pool, where, between the images of two trees, sat an engraving of a coffin with a dark spirit hovering above. The image distracted him, branded searingly upon his thoughts.

"Now," whispered the Queen next to him.

The old man hesitated for a moment. There would be much suffering. But it was the only way to set them all free.

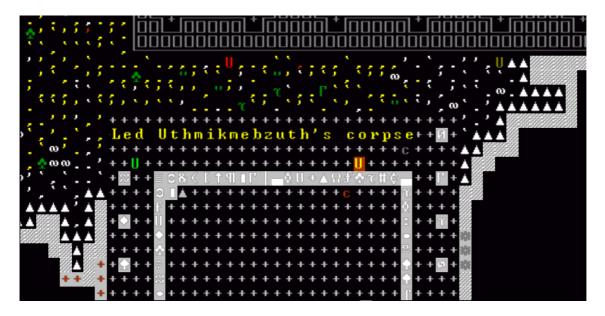
He opened the barrel. Inside, a putrid purple liquid rippled ominously. The old man held his breath, tried not to gag, and poured the barrel into the water, which took on a red tinge that spread through the pool like a flame.

"The lives of a thousand unborn, my Lady!" shouted the Queen as loud as her hoarse throat allowed. "We give them to you, that you may claim what is rightfully yours!"



An emerald light flickered blindingly against the marble walls. The bloodied water bubbled and boiled as though a vast heat had enshrouded it, and from the pool emerged a molten hand that grabbed hold of the old Queen, and with her body tore bursting through the temple ceiling. The royal entourage looked on aghast before the colossal limb came crashing back down on the Temple and brought it crumbling to the dusted ground, crushing everyone within.

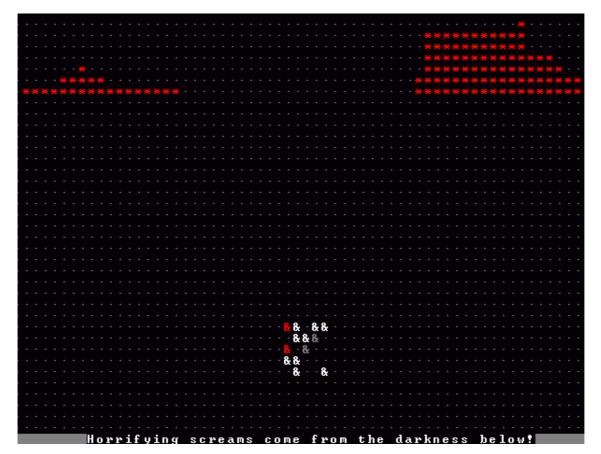
Outside, the Queen's body tumbled onto the pavement, and fell motionless, a heap of utterly broken gore. A few loyal soldiers looked on in disbelief, and slowly approached the familiar royal robes, now tattered and stained.



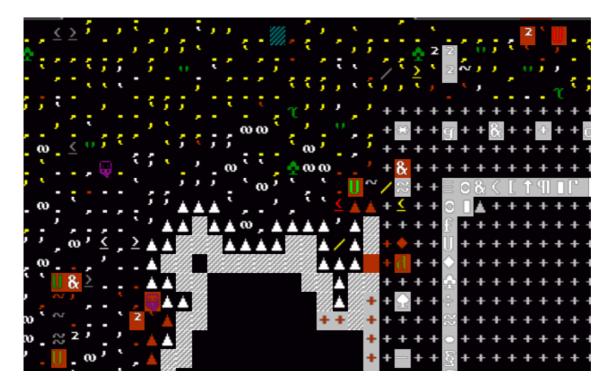
The fleshy hand bored deep through the earth itself, dissolving through the ground like an insatiable acid as it seethed into the caverns, leaving behind a smoldering trail. Miles beneath the deathly Temple, passing stone engraved in a time before time, the hand of Death continued down, devouring the land as it delved.



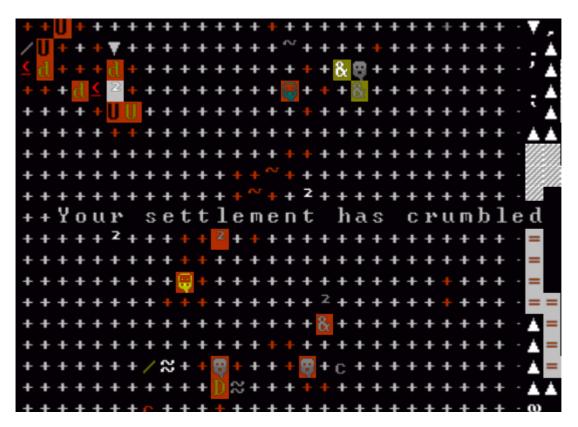
Through the mantle of the earth itself dove the hand until it came upon the adamantine seal below, and upon their meeting came an explosion so vast and tremulous it was heard far across the continent to the far reaches of the Plains of Ooze.



The dwarves and humans abandoned their battle to the catastrophic quakes and eerie howls taking hold of the city. Soon the massive ungodly shapes of the Underworld's denizens were everywhere, shadowy blurs through the sky ripping houses and tearing trees from their roots as they bled out of sight, great salt wolves leaping from buildings to shred any victim in sight.



In minutes not a single living soul was left in the open. The terrified citizens of the city took shelter in the few spared homes while the creatures of darkness swarmed through the streets, pillaging their victims for barbaric trophies.



Later, when the sun had retreated beyond the western horizon, a hollow laughter could be heard beside the ruined Temple. Endless, breathless, the cackling rose in pitch and fervor unnaturally, ceaselessly.

Trembling with unsteady, hollow joy, the Queen of Graspedseduce slowly arose to her feet. "Thank you, my Lady, thank you," she laughed in a breathless whisper.

```
Led Uthmikmebzuth, Skeletal
"Led Shakeoars" Human

upper body
lower body
head Winded
right upper arm
left upper arm
left lower arm
left lower arm
left hand
right upper leg
left upper leg
```

Andreus' Tale

"Stay back! Back, I say!"



"Run for it!" Andreus yelled to Glacial as he bolted for the door. The apprentice was not far behind him as the angry shouts faded to a safe distance. "Did you see that?" the Magister yelled. "They wanted to kill me! And I only just died!" The two entered the Sanctum and bolted the door. Heaving for air, the wizard reached for a wet towel and held it to his forehead.

"The whole place has gone crazy," Glacial said. "You can't even get a bucket of water in peace anymore."

"It isn't just Failcannon. The whole Universe has gone to the madhouse. We're doomed." Andreus sank down in his chair. "We might as well hold the door wide open for the goblins and hope..."

He trailed off, staring ahead. He turned in his seat and reached to a shelf, took down a small vial of poison from the Slime Ocean, and held it to the torchlight.

"Of course. Of course. Why didn't I realize this sooner?"

"Realize what?"

"If this is a place where the worlds intersect... it makes perfect sense for Led to send dwarves *here* to die. For every dwarf that dies here in the current chaos, that intersection grows wider. A great bulge is forming in a very thin line around our reality, and if it ruptures, nothing will hold the realms of life and death apart. For *any* world. It's as if we're the spleen of the multiverse, about to rupture."

"That sounds bad."

"It is. But my point is, if Led knows all this, and stands to profit the way I suspect she will, then try her best she will to widen the gap. When the Seal goes for good, she'll be able to raise an army from our own dead to take the fortress from us and use the gap to traverse the worlds, conquering each with her forces as they go. She needn't ever set a foot outside Graspedseduce to do that."

Glacial turned white. "Just how many people have we buried here at Failcannon?"

"Too many. The place is as good as theirs."

The apprentice mage turned away, glancing sadly at the floor. "Curse you forever, Lur Thiefwitch!" Andreus shouted at the sky. "You've ended us all!"

"You can tell him yourself," Glacial said. "He's trapped in LordSlowpoke's basement."

Andreus blinked. "You mean it worked?"

"Oh, the summoning? Yeah."

The wizard stepped deliberately toward his apprentice. "Why-didn't-you-SAY-SO?!" he roared.

"You didn't ask!"

`Andreus XII' Fikodisan, Timeless Mage is throwing a tantrum

Journal of 'Seth' Evonoltar, Overseer of Failcannon, excerpts



Moonstone 1

Someone throwing a tantrum has tossed the corpse of Grath's baby across the room where it's sat since she died. Aik continued to try and administer beatings to the forge workers in the name of law and order, but soon grew disgusted with the situation and threw down her sword. Thank the stone for little things.

```
The Captain of the Guard strikes at The Weaponsmith but the shot is blocked!
The Captain of the Guard stabs The Weaponsmith in the left foot with her (=«+cedar short sword+»=), but the attack is deflected by The Weaponsmith's +elk bird leather low boot+!

'Aik' Dumattad Keshan Catten, Captain of the Guard cancels Beat Criminal: Throwing tantrum.
```

Moonstone 3

```
Karakzon' Olonbisek is fighting! Dwarf Fortress 3rd Moonstone
'Xellas' Mesiråblel is fighting!

The Doctor Mechanic strikes The militia captain in the right lower leg
with her (bronze buckler), fracturing the bone through the (giant cave
spider silk dress)!

*The militia captain stands up.
```

Xellas continues to injure the other workers. I don't think he knows where he is anymore and I expect he'll be in chains any day now. Like Deathsword, whom I hear is being left to starve.

Moonstone 23

```
23rd Moonstone
`ArcaneSaint' Asëngisëk, Medical Student has calmed down.
`ArcaneSaint' Asëngisëk, Medical Student has gone stark raving mad!
```

ArcaneSaint has gone insane. The poor girl was seen gibbering to herself in a fetal position somewhere down in the depths of our halls.

I don't know what happened to break her spine but... ugh. Gods. These children never had a chance. Poor fools. Stupid parents, who brings their kids to a place like this? Or maybe they had about as much choice as the kids themselves?

Things are getting quieter.

Opal 7

```
'Xellas' Mesiråblel, Doctor Mechanic has calmed down.
'Elderont' Medenkib Ron Kuthdêng, Brewer has calmed down.
'Glacial' Kilrudnunok, Apprentice Mage is throwing a tantrum
'The True Mekboy' Bimmozib, Engraver has calmed down.
'Flagrarus' Uzollòr Gusilgecast Asrer, Metalsmith is throwin
'DuckThatQuacks' Sazirkôn, Clothier is throwing a tantrum!
```

Things are about the same.

Opal 11

```
'Xellas' Mesirâblel, Doctor Mechanic is throwing a tantrum!
green glass Door destroyed by 'Lupusater' Nunùroddom, Metalsmith.
slate Door destroyed by 'Kaamanen' Razeskib Osresh Sôd, Combat Surgeon
shale Table destroyed by 'Glacial' Kilrudnunok, Apprentice Mage.
The Stray Horse (Tame) has starved to death.

Bed destroyed by 'Xellas' Mesirâblel, Doctor Mechanic.
The Stray Cow (Tame) has starved to death.

**The Stray Horse Cow (Tame) has starved to death.

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**The Stray Horse Cow (Tame) has starved to death.

**The Stray Horse Cow (Tame) has starve
```

Sighhhhhh

Opal 12

```
The flying ((silver bolt)) strikes The Combat Surgeon in the left leg, bruising the muscle through the +bronze greaves+!
```

Xellas continues his ongoing effort to murder Kaamanen. His latest attempt was with a silver bolt near the sacrificial chamber, where the molded old skeletons of the trolls still remain.

Opal 13



Xellas has killed Kaamanen's dog. Whatever the Combat Surgeon did to piss off the Doctor Mechanic so badly, it needs to stop. If this is still because of that petty squabble at the well, I'll have them both shot down. I HATE THIS PLACE SO GOD DAMN MUCH

Okay, deep breaths. Just have to remind myself of all the silver we have. Wonderful, wonderful silver.

Opal 14

```
The Weaver punches The Captain of the Guard in the right upper leg with her left hand, bruising the muscle through the (+«*cave spider silk trousers*»+)!
```

The workers are starting to take their fight to the Fortress Guard again. Poet's trying to kill Aik in the warehouse as I write this. I'm not sure what's worse, the guards killing the people or the people killing each other. At least they all wait their turn.

In other news, it took me some time to realize Derm the Glassmaker was wandering the halls without a purpose but was not actually picking a fight with anyone. A little investigation revealed that all glass furnaces were in ruin thanks to Ledi IV's revolt, and once they were rebuilt, Derm wasted no time in getting back to work. Good ol' Derm, he makes me glad. This place can't be a total ruin as long as dwarves are still feeling inspired.



He's gathered some glass and is heading now for some wood. I hope he makes a giant glass spike I can use to trap my quarters once I lock myself inside forever and escape from this lunatic dungeon.

Opal 16

Lupusater has stabbed Nightmarebros in the foot outside the meeting hall. It's dangerous to go alone. Everyone is recommended to travel armed at all times, if even only with a wooden sword.



Opal 20



nonobots went berserk in the hospital, tried to throttle Little McArthur. Poet was sent to break up the fight and did so ruthlessly. This is a fortress of nightmares, a festering sore on the face of the planet. Were the sea to swallow us up the world would be safer.

Opal 23



Deathsword died of thirst in prison while LordSlowpoke looked on, guzzling a barrel of wine right in front of him. She'll make a fine doctor someday.

Opal 28

```
The Wrestler strikes The SteamPunk in the right hand with his *adamantine pick* and the severed part sails off in an arc!

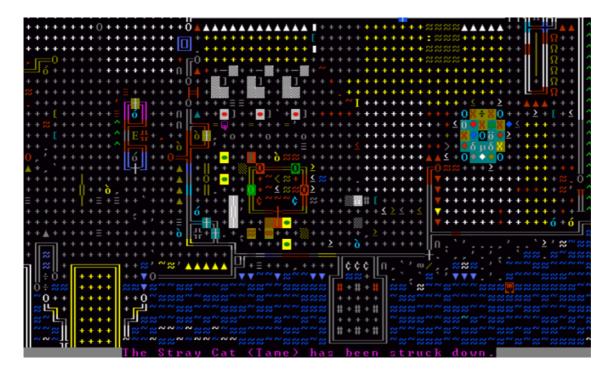
The Wrestler strikes The SteamPunk in the left lower leg with his *adamantine pick* and the severed part sails off in an arc!

*BrilTheGnome' Tathtatshem. SteamPunk has bled to death.
```

Damn it, Poet. You've strayed a long way from Tongsoracles, you bloodthirsty weaver.

I can't technically order him killed because he's not technically going berserk. I've been wondering why Aik isn't dealing with this ruffian but she's been very conveniently asleep throughout his entire rampage. Looks like it's time to swell the ranks of the Guard again.

Obsidian 1



It's grown so quiet here. Only the sounds of the sea can be heard when you're outside. Everything is so tidy now. Such a lovely lie.



All right, Poet, that's it. As Overseer I'm now officially seeking an end your life.

Obsidian 2

I think I know what's happening now. With Aik asleep and no one else in the Guard, Poet took it upon himself to enforce the law. You know, that set of rules supposed to keep people safe. Then he got upset with seeing people die and just started killing whatever got in his way. A strange but dwarven psychology. Every day you learn something new, like why it's bad to let dwarves with adamantine grow unhappy.

Obsidian 3

Still prowling about the warehouse, Poet made the mistake of attacking Tupu while the Champion was getting a new flask.

```
bashes The Wrestler in the right foot with his *silver ing the bone through the right ankle's muscle and shat le's bone!

gives in to pain.

""Poet' Wheelsweaken the Temple of Ra

""Poet' Wheelsweaken the Temple o
```

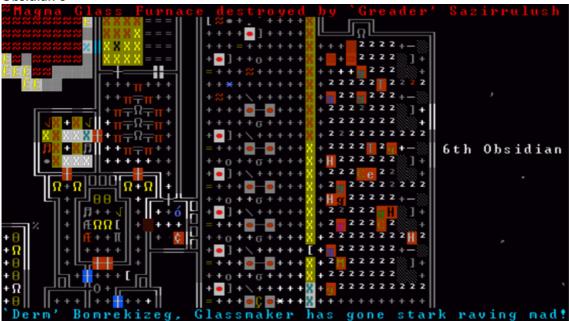
That was a big mistake. And so Tupu saves the fortress once again, this time from our psychotic weaver. I'm glad Tupu's still of sound mind. Poet is now a wrangled mess on the floor and I don't suspect he'll live much longer.

Obsidian 5

Poet has died from his hammer injuries alone and not at all from Mipe stabbing him through the heart to meake sure he couldn't be hospitalized.

Poet has died. Rest in peace, Creator of Tongsoracle. May you find in death the sanity this place took from you.

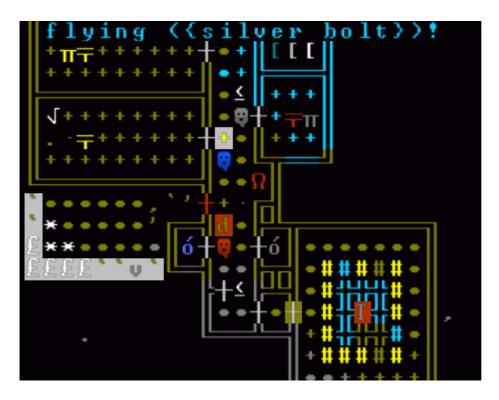
Obsidian 6



Somebody vandalized Derm's glass furnace and dumped magma on his wonderful masterpiece-in-progress. Derm took one look at the ruined workshop and completely lost his mind. Rest in peace,

Derm, in advance. I can't believe anyone would do that to a moody dwarf! That's about the lowest you can go. For shame, you murderous vandals. Now we'll never get that worthless glass trumpet I was so looking forward to.

Obsidian 8



Xellas is still on the loose. Today he turned his rage on Ledi V, and for a novice fighter she defended herself well.



The way she bit and scratched, I imagine she learned how to fight from her animal. Oh, did I mention that LAAT and the insane glassmaker somehow got involved in this?

```
The Glassmaker counterstrikes!
The Wrestler loses hold of the (bismuth bronze low boot).
The Glassmaker hacks The Wrestler in the left upper leg with -adamantine battle axe- and the severed part sails off in an The Wrestler falls over.
The Wrestler strikes The Glassmaker in the left lower arm wi =adamantine pick=, tearing apart the muscle!
The =adamantine pick= has lodged firmly in the wound!
The Farmer strikes at The Wrestler but the shot is parried!

"'Derm' Whipape"
Crawling around babbling!

No Job
Skilled Axedwarf
```

Oh, Derm didn't use his own axe, that's probably wherever he left his clothes. No, he used the axe that LAAT had just stuck into his chest as he was walking by babbling to himself. LAAT bled to death from a mangled heart soon afterwards and Xellas followed his example after Ledi stuck his throat.



So LAAT and xellas are both dead, Ledi's unscathed, Derm is doomed no matter how impressive, the entire hallway is FILLED with blood and I've buried my face in my hands for the past hour. It's only half past noon, but when I return to my quarters I'm going to bed.

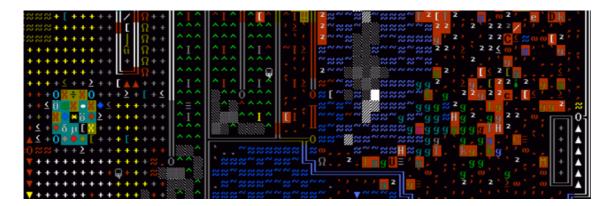
Obsidian 12

I found Filthywalrus today.

Not long after...



It was the twelfth of Obsidian when the goblins came for Failcannon. No ordinary goblins, bred from the darkest bowels of the Underworld, their red eyes gleamed in the direction of the fortress as their leader Stozu let out a booming laugh. "Ustol na ospo asto!" he roared. The goblins clapped their weapons down on the shale and marched forward. To the north, the second squad was wading through the flooding water pouring forth from the front gate. There was no way inside, but it mattered not. They would wait until the dwarves had no choice but to fight for their trade. Or simply let them all starve to death. Stozu smiled. Queen Led would reward them all well in the new world to come.



"Open the inner floodgates!" came the call from within the fort. A great waterfall surged out into the ravine overlooking the trade entrance. The invaders fell back to the beach above, driven off by the stink of the Blueness.

As the invaders gathered together by the gate, the day suddenly darkened. The tides assembled to rage against the rocks as the winds of storm began to brew. Soon the horizon blackened and as

lightning coursed along the clouds, a dazzling luminescence rumbled through the air as two great dark eyes appeared in the sky.



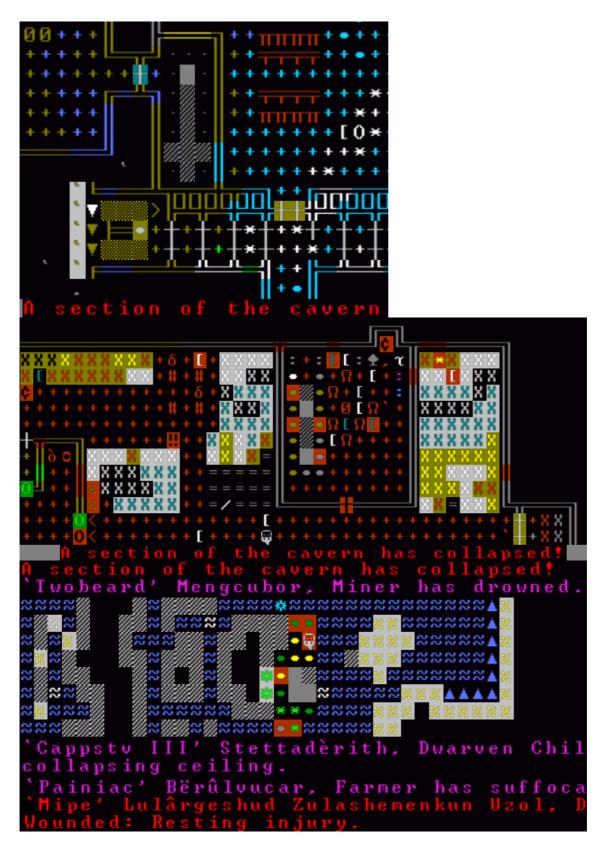
Deep within the fortress, Andreus was shrieking with growing impatience at the sad-looking ghost floating above. "Come on, Thiefwitch! You have to remember! We're running out of time!"

"All is lost," the ghost bemoaned. "Everything comes to an end."

Andreus screamed his frustration, grabbed the chain and tossed it out of the room. Lur's ghost was dragged along like a paper doll and fell straight through the floor, through which his sobbing could be heard.

"It can't end this way!" the wizard screamed. "There must be a way out!"

From the sundered sky issued forth an emerald bolt of lightning that coursed through the sand and shocked the very stone surrounding the fortress. A section of rock gave way to the plasmic fire and a great ledge of shale smashed its way through half of the fortress before coming to a stop in the ocean below.

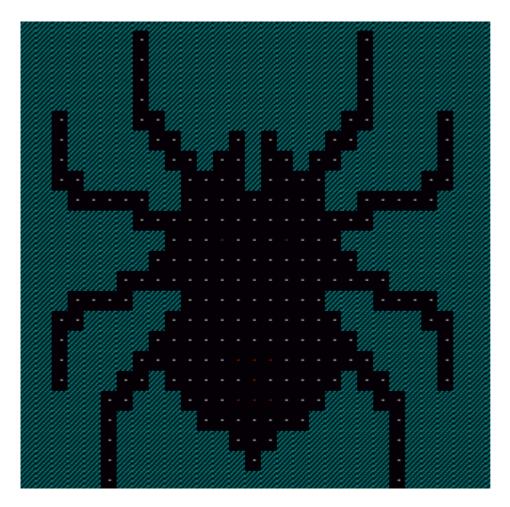


The rock came back through the ground, clutching a writhing dwarf screaming bedlam as the stones carried him far into the sky. The unblinking eyes in the sky narrowed down and a low voice, barely a whisper, nonetheless rose above the chanting of the goblins and the roaring of the storm to be heard by everyone present.

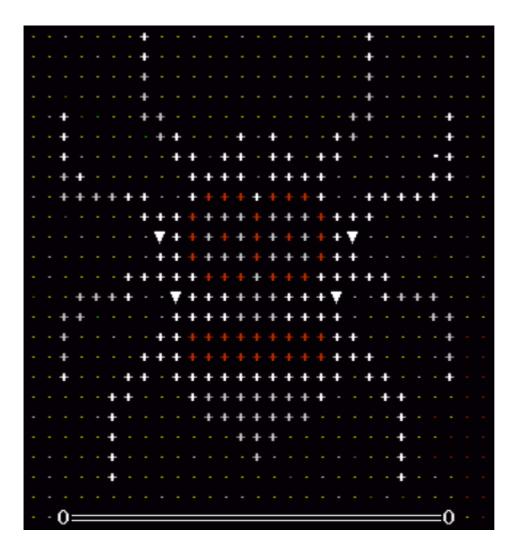
"Hello, dwarves. This is your Queen, Led Shakeoars. You have done well in building this fortress, but your service is no longer needed. The Lady of Death for whom I speak requires only your corpses. We shall begin now with that of the one who calls himself your Overseer, your leader. You have only one leader now." The rocks surrounding the dwarf in the sky glowed with a red intensity, then collapsed together in an explosion louder and more terrible than any mortal ears had heard before.



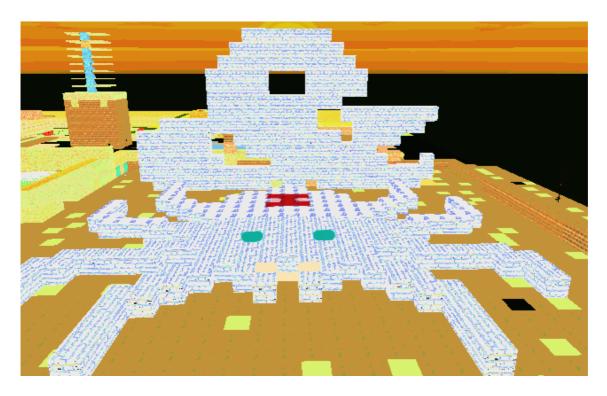
Panicked shouts picked up throughout the fort. As the dust settled from the blast, another plasmic bolt came crashing upon the beach from the sky. From the sand grew forth a sinister structure with shards of bone clawing around the ivory walls and sinewy strands woven across it.



"You are all the first sacrifices to the New World," whispered the Queen's voice. "Failcannon is now the High Temple of the Order of Death. And soon your bones shall kneel before us too!"



The broken masses of the undead defeated on the beach stirred once again, and as the sky glowed with hellish fire and the sea darkened and bubbled like pitch, hobbling their shattered pieces, one by one, the skorses knelt as one before the unholy monument.



"This isn't happening," Andreus chuckled. "It's not real! Not real!"

"Start bringing people back to life!" Glacial screamed. "There's still time!"

"I can't!" Andreus laughed loudly. "This body's no good for magic!"

"O cruel destiny," Lur's voice pleaded aloud. "O fettered Gods. Only watch us disappear!"

"Teach me the secret! I can try!"

"There isn't enough time!"

"More time," Lur begged to the air. "We need more time..."

"Glacial," Andreus said. "Get me the Journal!" He looked at his apprentice, who stood with his back turned, staring at the wall. "Glacial?"

As the apprentice turned around, Andreus gasped in shock.

The goings of the gods

"Ura."

The skeletal goddess turned around to face the speaker who'd managed to startle her. Her grin shone out from out the black cloak she wore as she observed the Windy World from the hollow skull atop her lofty Tower in the Plains of Ooze, the Tower looking over the fortress once known as Battlefailed.

"Why Thoth." Death held her bony palm out to the sea. "Are you hear to pledge alliegence at my hour of victory?"

"No." The godling crossed his arms as emerald lightning rent the sky. "You've gone too far, again. You need to be stopped."

"I see," Ura grinned. "All the others have fled or been cast down. But I expect you are going to stop me yourself?"

"No," Thoth said. He pointed behind. "I have help."

Ura's grin seemed to widen. "Little god, I am very old. I've known Lur a very long time. You cannot trick me with such foolishness."

```
the Skeletal Human Goddess `Ura' is fighting!
the Giant Toad Giant Toad 1 is fighting!

Giant Toad 1 charges at Skeletal Human 1!
Giant Toad 1 bites Skeletal Human 1 in the left lower arm,
glances away!
Giant Toad 1 collides with Skeletal Human 1!
Skeletal Human 1 is knocked over and tumbles backward!
```

As the great Toad pounded upon the dark goddess from behind and sent her sprawling, Thoth leapt forward, seizing his one opportunity, that singular moment of surprise, his form shimmering and transforming in mid-air. With a roar, he fell upon Death with lion's jaws.

In a greenish flare and an incoherent howl, the skeletal deity slackened and fled the Windy World. Her skeletal body dissolving, without a body here, for now, at least, Ura could no longer directly mingle in mortal affairs. The mortals were gifted with time, and hopefully that was enough. The great Toad, duty served, croaked and returned to his watery home in the caves until needed again.

vanished.

Thoth struggled to drag his lion's form to its feet. The energies released by Ura's banishment would mean his own life was soon to end, but if the Seal could be restored, then he would not be lost forever. In peace, as the lapping of ocean waves took over his consciousness, Thoth curled into a ball and mutely died.

Meanwhile...

"What is it?" Glacial asked, bewildered. "What's wrong?"

"I don't know?" Andreus looked at the shoe he was wielding aloft. "Weren't you just a skeleton?"

"Was I?"

A terrible cry split through the ears of everyone in the fort, then faded away.

"What in Lur's name is that?" wondered Glacial.

"A chance," the ghost of Thiefwitch moaned.

Obsidian 12, Winter Solstice Fortress Log, Anonymous

The Overseer is dead. Goblins are everywhere outside. Something very strange has just taken place, but for now, I think, the weather has cleared...



Lord Slowpoke's Journal

I have awoken.

Drifting amongst the worlds is a thing you don't forget, even without a mind to record it truly. I'm not a man of words, to be honest. I'm not even sure why I'm writing this. But since I already did, I'm not going to toss a finely crafted orthoclase journal into the magma. That'd be a waste. Nevertheless, something has awakened me. A shockwave, to say, as if someone caused a cave-in. Like someone dumped a whole vein of magnetite on a floor of adamantine. Something about the speed of sound being turned into the speed of light and cutting musician's fingers off. Oh, what am I doing here again? I haven't been drinking anything for what seems to be eternity. What's the way to the booze stockpile.

The goings of the gods

"And so Ura is banished from the Windy World."

"For the time. Thoth did exactly what he was supposed to."

"A rather cold outlook for you."

"It's not yet time for joy, nor sorrow. Yet we will see him again. I do not intend to abandon him to oblivion. If the Seal is saved, things will eventually return as they were."

"And when the Seal is destroyed?"

"Then we will go to war if we must to save him."

"The Conflict of Atrocities."

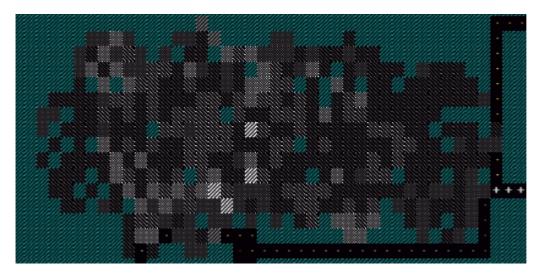
"I'm afraid it is inevitable."

"We shall all lose something. No one can win such a war, Kigok."

"I know you are not that naive, Otik. Someone would win that war, and it has to be us."

Meanwhile...

Deprived of the fell powers holding it aloft, the demonic symbol cracked and crumbled to the ground.



```
The Farmer is having trouble breathing!
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of goblin n/a!
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of boiling magma
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of goblin n/a!
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of boiling magma
The Farmer is caught in a burst of yellow sand!
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of boiling magma
The Farmer slams into an obstacle!
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of boiling magma
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of boiling magma
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of boiling magma
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of boiling magma
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of goblin n/a!
The Farmer is caught in a cloud of goblin n/a!
```

At the goblin bone trading bridge overlooking the eastern walls, Tupu had gathered twenty dwarves to make a stand against the invasion force. "Lads," he said. "I have no idea what just happened, but there's bones to collect. Now get out there and make these goblins never live to regret this day!"

The bridge fully extended, and the dwarves and goblins charged forward to match blades.

```
The flying ((iron bolt)) strikes The Axedwarf in the head, tearing the muscle, chipping the skull and tearing the brain through the =rope refiber hood:

A tendon in the skull has been torn!

The Axedwarf has been knocked unconscious!

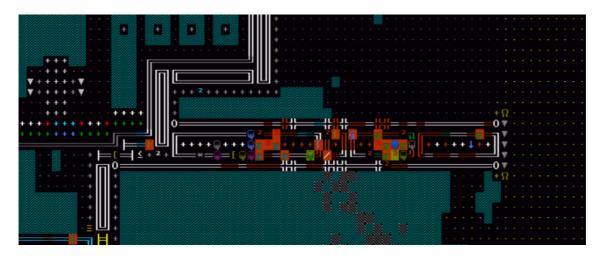
The ((iron bolt)) has lodged firmly in the wound!

'Thatdude' Rûldodók Niralsil Zanor, Axedwarf has been shot and killed 'Tupu' Ostral Katthir Dumat, Champion has entered a martial trance!

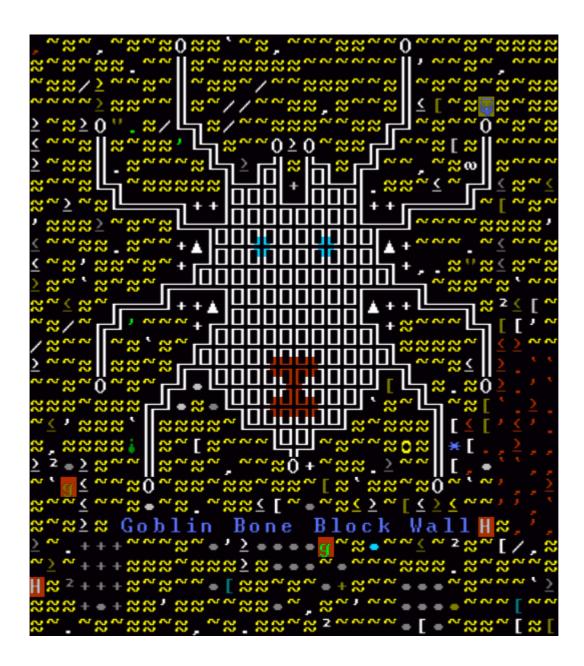
**Tupu' Ostral Katthir Dumat, Champion has entered a martial trance!

**Tupu' Ostral Katthir Dumat, Champion has entered a martial trance!
```

When the goblins were soundly defeated, Failcannon still stood, a proud and defiant speck against the long, lonely coastline of the Bluenuess of Malodors.



That evening, then the weary and wounded dwarves settled to their ale and roasts, the in-fighting finally calming, Andreus and Glacial walked cautiously across the damp sand in search of the former Overseer's body. Failcannon hardly needed any more ghosts at the moment. In the southwest where the fortress met the shoreline, the great spider loomed, a shadowy sentinel against the sea's horizon.



"What happened today, Andreus?"

"To speculate, I'd say the Universe became a bit more fair than it once was."

"Look," Glacial said in awe as they walked with the body back toward the gate.

"I have eyes," Andreus said.

"There's so many of them! I never noticed how many until they were gone."

"A great many things are like that."

"Does this mean it's over?"

"As far as I know the Seal is still damaged. Queen Led may still be out there. The Shadow is yet to be dealt with. I expect Death has only been waylaid. But this is a good sign, I think."



Back in the ruins of Graspedseduces...

As the once prosperous city of Graspedseduce sat in smoking ruin, the guards were providing what little food and water could be managed from within the shattered temple. By the door, the old man huddled over anxiously, wondering when the demons would come for them. He could stall perhaps one demon, but any more would overwhelm him. None of this had been in the visions. This was all very disheartening.

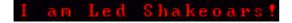
The temple doors burst suddenly open and the old man sprang to his feet like a youth but a quarter his age. But instead of a demon stood a hunched, impossibly thin figure wrapped in a robe of darkest midnight. The old man drew back in horror.

"You're alive!"

"Alive? Not quite, you insolent frog. Far more than that."

"But I saw you die!"

"Silence! Do you not know who I am?



And I will never die."

A Letter to the Next Overseer:

If you're reading this, then I've probably been killed by the rioters since, were I alive, we could have

this discussion in person.

The place is more organized than two years ago, there are more goods are in bins, but the place is still a mess. The dwarves are drafted with assigned clothing and weaponry, and most of the dwarves still alive are happy enough. There are about seven dwarves in the hospital but Seraphin has no tasks assigned but healthcare and I expect everyone should recover. I don't think there's any poison left on the floor, either, there was a staircase covered in poison blood from a beast killed years ago but that should be gone now.

Oh, almost forgot, the primary metal and armor stockpiles are completely flooded by the Ocean of Slime.

I added some notes explaining stuff I added or learned about. If there's an unlabelled lever I have no idea what it does.

Have fun, you brave soul.

Personal journal of Strategia Staffdanced, Cheesemaker and Marksdwarf-under-Duress

Entry 1 - sometime in 535 (I think).

It's hard to keep track of time here in Failcannon. It's probably around 535-ish, but I have no idea - what passes for "nature" here is so screwy (and mostly undead) that seasons are nearly impossible to track, and nobody really knows how long the stars were out. Doesn't matter anyway. I've decided to start writing a journal, to chronicle the madness of this place. I'm not talking about the fact that everyone who lives here is turning into a psychotic maniac, that's the usual state of affairs everywhere (no wonder so many people move away to settle in Armok-forsaken places like this), or the fact that the local wildlife doesn't want to stay dead - this fort *does not have any cheese*. Can you imagine! By Armok, it's no wonder this place is going down the magma chute - what kind of civilisation can be sustained without cheese?

I sometimes yearn for my days back at Graspedseduce, where everyone knew me and my cheeses, and respected me enough to cross the street when I walked wait when did I lose my right hand. I swear it was just attached a moment ago, I have no idea where it went. Could have happened during that scuffle with those humans. I swear, journal, the insolence of some people! Asking me to perform something called a "pole-dance" just because of my last name! The Staffdanced line has been a staple of Graspedseduce culture and high society for centuries, the name has nothing to do with lowly smut-peddlers like these hairless, sober humans! The name itself is a testament to my lofty heritage, it came from my great-great-grandmother's youth as an ecdysiast! (note to self: must remember to look up what that is someday) I must remember to dedicate the next few goblins I kill to Painiac, if he hadn't snapped and raised his crossbow at the same time I shot that maceman for insulting me, I would be among the many dead in this fortress' history.

But I am not. I survived. And now, in the name of the late Painiac, I dedicate the rest of my life (between invasions and rebellions) to bringing this place the glorious wonders of CHEESE. I may not be able to make my signature dragon tallow limburger here, but I sense interesting possibilities with some of the secretions of the Forgotten Beasts in this place. And the smells wafting from some of the older goblin corpses remind me so much of my old dairy I simply must try doing something with them - I could claim it was refuse disposal if necessary.

Mark my words, journal, I will bring cheese - and with it, civilisation - to this place, or die trying!

TURN 19 – CATALYSTPARADOX

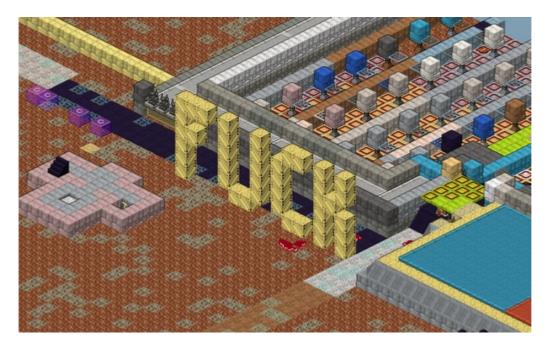
Loyalty Cascade

Journal of 'Catalyst' - Elven Studies Major

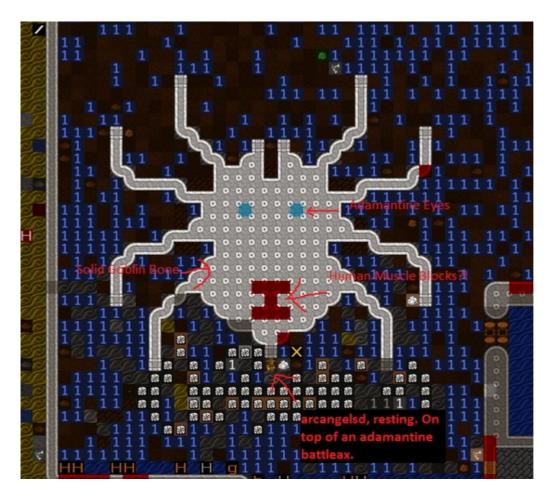
We fled Graspedseduce in our wagons by the hundreds. Women, children, cats, keets and pet alpacas, we came shivering across the Plains of Ooze fleeing the ruin and mad wrath of the demonqueen Led Shakeoars. Many of our brothers and sisters had risen in rebellion against the excesses of the Mad Queen, and many and more were cut down by her cult and their terrible servants. I will never forget the sounds or sights of the night wolves tore apart the dwarves of Graspedseduce, their bodies all of salt, reeking of gore and brimstone.

After this, somehow fleeing to the fortress of Failcannon sounded like a good idea. I will attempt to chronicle herein the folly that ensued.

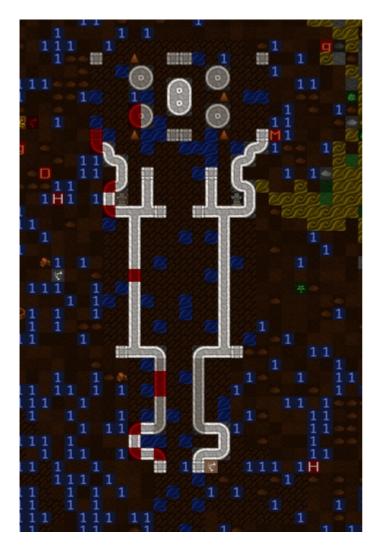
We recognized Failcannon by its famous sculptural masterpeice - truly, nothing in the history of our art has better expressed the Dwarven condition.



Stranger monuments awaited us within the gates. It would appear that the only material more abundant than gold at Failcannon is goblins. The dwarfs who received me proudly showed me the enormous spider statue, and explained its construction.



I thanked them for the nightmares I would be having for the next month, and declined an explanation of the other structure across the yard, built of a distinctly *different* type of bone. I decided I might be better not knowing.



I was immediately struck by the sad state of fortress - a population of a mere 28 dwarves in the entire vast structure, itself in terrible disarray. Worse, though, were the dwarves themselves. One can scarce find a sane and whole dwarf in the entire place - and IF you do, they are most likely one of the many grim, heavily-armed, hardened killers stalking the halls and ready to fill you with bolts at the first sign of discontent. When we arrived, we had apparently just missed our chance to witness the glory of Dwarven Justice in action.

```
The The Chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer but She jumps away!
The The Chronicler misses The Animal Trainer in the head with his right
The The Chronicler punches The Animal Trainer in the head with his right
hand bruising the muscle and bruising the neck is muscle through the
(pig tall fiber hood))!
The The Chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer but She jumps away!
The The Chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer but She jumps away!
The The Chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer but She jumps away!
The The Chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer in the left upper arm with
his left hand bruising the fat through the (giant cave spider silk
cloak)!
The The Chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer in the right upper arm with
her left hand bruising the fat through the cloak of the fat through the chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer but She jumps away!

The The Chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer but She jumps away!

The The Chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer but She jumps away!

The The Chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer but She jumps away!

The The Chronicler attacks The Animal Trainer but She jumps away!

The The Chronicler attac
```

It was clearly an epic battle that took place, starting with Greader, Tabul, and the Chronicler Takua. It all took place next to the huge and surely very-efficient corpse-and-food stockpile.



In the course of things, Takua took quite a beating, yet still stayed on his feet. Meanwhile others in the fort got involved, including some fellow calling himself Andreus the "Timeless Mage", stepped in to pepper Greader with shots, and one child caught in the crossfire.

```
silk cloak)x!
A major artery in the heart has been opened by the attack!
The ( goblin bone bolt!) has lodged firmly in the wound!
The The Chronicler mises The Stoneworker!
The The Chronicler gives in to pain!
+The The Chronicler falls over!
```

Strangely, this encounter did not last long, as all the dwarves went back to their respective business shortly thereafter. Except in Andreus's case, where that business was apparently taking potshots at anyone who happened to be nearby, regardless of whether they were, say, crippled in a hospital bed.

The fight soon spilled to involve an Alchemist named Grov trading shots with Andreus as well, as That Aussie Dwarf slunk off somewhere after suffering one ineffectual potshot. A soldier named Elt intervened and Andreus soon found himself in dire straits.

```
Endreus XII Fikodisan has been ecstatic lately. He brought somebody to bed lately. He admired a fine Bed lately. He sleet without a proper room recently. He sleet without a state of the sleet with the rate recently. He was discussed by a mission lately. He has been satisfied at work lately. He was discussed by a mission lately. He has been satisfied at work lately. He was discussed by a mission lately. He has been satisfied at work lately. He was discussed by a mission lately. He has been satisfied at work lately. He has not seen and an ardent worshipper of Kigok Pokercooks.

He is a former member of The Sword of Boots. He is a former member of The Enchanted Labor of Treaties. He is an enemy of the Sword of Boots he is a former sember of the is an enemy of the Sword of Boots he is a seventy-eight years old born on the 22nd of Slate in the year 456.

His recent lately will be a broken. His left lower arm is cut open. His left lower arm is broken. His left lower arm is broken. His left lower arm is broken. His left lower lag is broken. His left lower lag is broken. His left lower lag is broken. His laft upper lag is broken. His laft upper lag is broken. His laft lower lag is broken. His laft lower lag is broken. His laft upper lag is broken. His laft lower lag is broken. His laft lower lag is broken. His laft upper lag is broken. His laft lower lag is broken.
```

As Andreus dragged himself around the floor of the statue garden, apparently intent on painting the floor bright red, as his last act on earth, a one-handed cheesemaker, Strategia, decided to join in on the shooting gallery.

• Andreus XII Fikodisan Timeless Mage has suffocated

I have yet to understand exactly why Andreus was targetted. I have heard some nonsense about "his sins from past lives" but surely I have misunderstood.

Greader, of course, continued his rampage, this time pursuing the !!Scientist!! Uristein, while EmeraldWind pursued several others, inflicting minor injuries on each. Greader retired for the night, apparently feeling that a good day's work had been done. Meanwhile that night, 'Dete' succumbed to an infected wound, presumable unrelated to the scratch that Greader had just given him, and the soldier Elt exacted retribution on EmeraldWind for the chaos that had been carried out largely by Greader. Both are Stoneworkers by trade, so I can understand the confusion.

Yet, I find it odd that there is so little distinction between "dwarven justice" and "taking potshots at your fellow dwarves for sport". I guess the list of dwarves in need of punishment in this place is actually longer than the job queue and the current population roster, combined.

Apparently the 5th death was a dwarf named Sinpwn - he died in his bed of thirst, it would seem. The doctors here are apparently too overburdened to care for all the injured. I hope I am up to the task of setting this right, but the task of bringing order to this fortress will be much like selling toothpicks to elves.

It did not take long for the slaughter to resume. Strategia shot down a cat, and soon engaged the militia captain, Mormota, in combat as well. She seems to be tough, for a one-handed cheesemaker, and it was captain Mormota who hit the ground fainting from pain soon enough. Strategia continued her rampage across the fort, leaving Mormota unconscious, injuring several and shooting down the soldier Vee with a few well placed bolts.

```
The Soldier blocks The flying (goblin bone bolt)!
The Soldier blocks The flying ((*iron bolt*))!
The flying (*goblin bone bolt*) strikes The Soldier in the right upper arm chipping the bone through the X(pig tail fiber cloak)X!
A tendon has been torn!
The Soldier gives in to pain
The Soldier gives in to pain
The Soldier falls over
The flying (*goblin bone bolt*) strikes The Soldier in the left lower arm chipping the bone through the X(pig tail fiber cloak)X!
A ligament has been torn and a tendon has been torn!
The flying (*goblin bone bolt*) strikes The Soldier in the head tearing the muscle jamming the skull through the brain and tearing the brain!
A tendon in the skull has been torn!
The (*goblin bone bolt*) has lodged firmly in the wound!
Vee Bermuthir Emethumar Duthnur Soldier has been shot and killed
```

As she continued to plunk arrows into the various citizens of Failcannon, the guard finally decided this was the time to spring into action. Moments later, Strategia lay dead. Elsewhere, Ahriman decided to now continue what seems to have been a long-running rampage, and struck down Scaraban so quickly it seemed almost incidental. DuckThatQuacks then intervened and quickly put an end to Ahriman's rampage with his deadly battleax, then quickly sprinted to the aid of the injured

PAINBRINGER against Elt the soldier, who also succumbed to the deadly ax. DuckThatQuacks descended, moments later, upon the Chronicler Takua, who, since his initial injury in these riots some weeks ago, had laid injured and unconscious in a stockpile. Things looked grim for Takua, but it was then that Urist Imiknorris awoke, and with his famous spear "Tuftedfatal, the Roughness of Roaring" laid into DuckthatQuacks, soon chasing him through the hallways, soaked in blood. DuckThatQuacks fled down the stairs, into the bowels of the earth, only to come screaming out again the instant Urist gave up pursuit. The axe made quick work, and the heroic speardwarf fell.

```
The Axedwarf hacks The The Chronicler in the upper body with her adamantine battle axe. Itearing apart the muscle and shattering the right false rib through the x(cave spider silk cloak)x!

An artery has been opened by the attack!

A tendon in the right false rib has been torn!

The Madamantine battle axem has lodged firmly in the wound!

The Speardwarf stabs The Axedwarf in the right hand from the side with his Kasbenodroz Dumat Orrun tearing the muscle through the (pig tall fiber right mitten)!

An artery has been opened by the attack and a motor nerve has been severed!

The Axedwarf loses hold of the (**Iron shield**)

The Axedwarf loses hold of the (**Iron shield**)

The Axedwarf hacks The Metalsmith in the head with her Madamantine battle axem but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith's Madamantine battle axem but the attack is deflected by the Metalsmith's Madamantine battle axem but the Attack is deflected by The Metalsmith's Madamantine battle his Kasbenodroz Dumat Orrun tearing the fat through the Mroom behind with his Kasbenodroz Dumat Orrun tearing the fat through the Mroom behind with his Kasbenodroz Dumat Orrun tearing the fat through the Mroom behind with his Madamantine helm!

The Speardwarf stabs The Axedwarf in the right upper arm from behind with his Kasbenodroz Dumat Orrun tearing the fat through the Mroom behind with his Kasbenodroz Dumat Orrun tearing the fat through the Mroom behind with his Madamantine helm!

The Axedwarf scratches is deflected by The Metalsmith's Madamantine helm!

The Axedwarf scratches The Speardwarf in the left foot with her Madamantine helm!

The Axedwarf scratches The Speardwarf in the left hand bruising the muscle through the (pig tall provided the left hand bruising the Mroom behind with the Madamantine helm!

The Axedwarf hacks The Speardwarf in the left foot with her Madamantine helm!

The Axedwarf scratches The Speardwarf in the left foot with her Madamantine helm!

The Axedwarf hacks The Speardwarf in the left hand bruising the muscle through the Call and
```

Eleven dwarfs lay dead already, and the madness had not yet run its course. Meanwhile, a new forgotten beast made its presence known deep below... but I think even it feared to come above.



I have heard in hushed whispers this ongoing madness was somehow caused by the Demon Queen Led... but I know not how. Could it be that the rebellion continues in this place, her agents lurking among the brave dwarfs of Failcannon? Or is something more sinister, more... occult at play... This all took place before my arrival, so I have little to go on... and it seems there is no one here I dare trust.

I must learn the truth of it, and soon, or we may all be doomed.

Personal journal of Strategia Staffdanced, Cheesemaker and Marksdwarf-under-Duress

Entry 2 - Not an Armok-damned clue when

No cheese! Not a single chunk! The insolence! Does that worthless administrator know *nothing* about me and my cheeses? I used to be vital for Graspedseduce's survival! All of my famous cave lichen brie was sealed away in a secure underground vault, as last-ditch emergency food stocks! My singular batch of elven gorgonzola (made with real distilled elf extract!) was given to the goblins as a peace offering! (Though I never got the specifics - the siegedwarfs manning those particular catapults were never allowed within the walls of the city again. Must've been sent as ambassadors or something.) Armokdammit, it's even a part of who, of *what*, we are: A short, sturdy creature fond of drink, cheese and industry!

This cannot stand. This is no civilisation. A fortress without cheese is a fortress of barbarians - and no self-respecting dwarf must be forced to live among barbarians. I must correct this. I will correct this. And since I am apparently not allowed to make cheese, by the order of the barbarian-in-chief, I must proceed to put Failcannon's dwarfs out of their misery! For civilisation! For Failcannon! For CHEESE!

P.S. I looked up "ecdysiast" in the dwarftionary. No longer that impressed with Great-Great-Grandma Urist.

(The rest of the journal is covered in blood and the occasional bit of organ meat - which would've made a fine veteran's emmentaler, had anyone bothered to notice)

A small book lies on the floor, no name on the cover save and author refers to himself in the third person, obscuring his identity from anyone who may find it. Mainly the authorities

- Entry 1 -

If I am to sieze this fortress for my own, it will take careful manipulation of the locals, steering them towards the grand prize - the fortress and it's rumored adamantine wealth. With this, i can send these armored fools to willingly take over the world "in the name of mighty Failcannon". Fools.

- Entry 2 -

Phase one was a success - the others believe me crippled and have laid me up in the hospital with my crossbow close at hand (the locals believe me to be a poor shot. A matter i'll have to correct if they manage to get in here during the "heated discussions" that are probably about to occur) and a dwarf waiting on me hand-and-foot. With any luck, the careful lies i spread amongst the locals should make them all rather distrustful of each other...

- Entry 3 -

Outside these walls echo the screams of the dying and bloodthirsty. I may have taken it too far when i spread glue on the handle of Aik's sword right before he had to go deal with the uprising i've instigated, but it's too late now to resolve that situation.

- Entry 4 -

Armok save me. I was caught out of bed, on my way back from warning the dwarven diplomat of SethCreyd's treachery. Fortunately, the idiots believed me to be simply healed and put me back to work making mechanisms.

- Entry 5 -

Andreus XII found this journal. I'll have to be more careful at hiding it from now on. Thankfully, he was branded as a traitor and shot (Pretty easy to pull off these days, especially if you point and yell at someone loud enough for Aik to hear. Must remember to stay in his good books when i sieze power). By myself and a few others. Most satisfying to get my hands dirty for once, i must admit. As a precaution, i've erased my name from these entries and replacing them with the simple moniker of "That Aussie Dwarf".

Journal of Catalyst, Elven Studies Major - 23rd Slate 535

The journey was long and arduous. Though we prepared carefully, not all of us would survive to see Failcannon.



Of the many wagons leaving Graspedseduced, some dozen came with us toward the frigid south. Soon, ours was the only one. When we arrived at Ungegugath, we were just four in number.





We were in poor health.



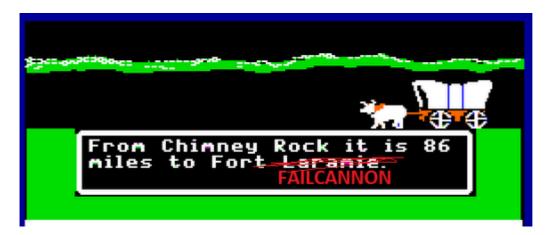
Myself, Keltiknight, Katsuun, and Darvi were the only survivors of the long trail.



Poor Urist.



We lost our own wagon, and all our animals as well. But the end was in sight...



When we arrived at Failcannon, we heard:

```
Duckinatwoacks Sazirkkn has become a Liothier
Some migrants have arrived despite the danger
Dariush III Bermesir Awesome Soldier has died from thirst
```

the dying moans of an injured soldier filling the cold, foul air...

```
jet Lever r=2000) strikes The Ettin in the lower r=2000 strikes The Ettin in the left r=2000 strikes The Ettin in the lower rikes The Ettin in the lower rikes The Ettin in the right upper rikes The Ettin in the right lower leg but the attack glances away!

The spinning -chestnut training spear- strikes The Ettin in the left upper arm but the attack glances away!

The spinning (buser-cap training spear) strikes The Ettin in the right foot bruising the skin raining spear strikes The Ettin in the right foot bruising the skin the spinning (palm training spear) strikes The Ettin in the right lower leg but the attack glances away!

The spinning (lik-acacia training spear->>> strikes The Ettin in the right upper leg but the attack glances away!

The spinning (lik-acacia training spear->>>> strikes The Ettin in the right upper leg but the attack glances away!

The spinning (x-cedar training spear->>>> strikes The Ettin in the left lower arm but the attack glances away!
```

the screams of an Ettin, being tormented by the Captain of the Guard...

And the tale I related to you earlier. At this time, I am told, the military had just been assigned to take up positions guarding the makeshift, overcrowded hospital, to await the next assault from the renegade dwarfs. Tension was in the air, thick as the sludgy waters of the Blueness.

I must tell you a secret. I am not like other dwarfs.

From the day I was born I have had... a talent. To the elves it is a "gift", but what would you expect from a race that thinks chewing on their dead siblings raw toes is a good way to "return them to nature" anyway? For any dwarf, this ability is a curse.

I can read minds.

```
Catalyst Tiristlektad has been quite content lately
She is a faithful worshipper of Otik the Blueness of Flickers and a faithful
worshipper of Enshal Dawnfuture
She is a citizen of The Sword of Boots She is a member of The Enchanted Labor
of Treaties She is the mayor of The Enchanted Labor of Treaties
She is a citizen of The Sword of Boots She is a member of The Enchanted Labor
of Treaties She is the mayor of The Enchanted Labor of Treaties
She is fifty-eight years old born on the 9th of Timber in the year 476
Her jade eyes are slightly protruding She is large and fait Her wavy hair is
quite dense Her very long hair is tied in a pony tail Her nose is extremely long
She has very low cheekbones and she has a broad chin Her head is extremely
narrow Her quite sparse eyebrows are slightly low Her hair is dark tan Her skin
is ecru
She is almost never sick and agile but she is weak and slow to heal
Catalyst Tiristlektad likes talc sterling silver faint yellow diamond
gorilla leather swordfish bone cave spider slik mountains earrings cats for
their aloofness and cave dragons for their impressive teeth When possible she
prefers to consume sole wild strawberries and dwarven rum. She absolutely detests
She has uncanny intuition but she has meager creativity poor focus little
will power and a poor memory.

She has an incredibly calm demeanor. She often feels discouraged She can
handle stress She is somewhat reserved She enjoys the company of others. She is
very active. She is put off by authority and tradition. She is immodest She is
compassionate. She is confident She is self-disciplined. She has a very distinct
laugh for when she is excited. She needs alcohol to get through the working day.

A short sturdy creature fond of drink and industry.
```

Well, okay, so its not quite so dramatic as that. Those words make it sound so clear, when in truth the minds of men and dwarves are murkier than the Blueness. I can sense moods, feel a person's good or bad thoughts, just by looking at them. Sometimes I get glimpses of what they're doing, from far away. I dreamed about the riots every night, along the whole journey to Failcannon, you see - how else could I have known in such detail what transpired?

This may sound useful to you but... try to imagine, for a moment, what it would really be like. It cannot be turned off. You can hear and feel all the minds around you - the mad ones, the despairing ones, the fey ones, the drunk ones and the ecstatic ones and those so hardened by the horrors they have seen they feel as blank and stark as fresh-forged steel. Constantly.

Truly, Hell is other dwarves.

When I came to Failcannon, I already knew their fears, their anger, their hopes and their despair. I

knew about the riots, of course, and that an emergency election would soon be called in response, as some shouted that not only did Mekboy not do enough, as Mayor, to prevent the riots, but also participated in them.

Sharing my secret with you serves two purposes. First, so you may understand how I so easily assuaged the fears of these poor dwarves even as I played on them. But second, and more importantly, so you understand that I did not want this. Personal gain was the furthest thing from my mind, and I still feel terrible for exploiting their trust. But Failcannon was tearing itself apart from within - and it seemed I was the only one with the power to heal it.

It was Ledi V who met us as we arrived, and gave us our tour of Upper Failcannon. Once we spoke of the current state of the settlment, she was easily persuaded to call for the vote herself. After that, debating Mekboy was no trouble - anticipating every talking point he had left him flustered, and I have always exuded a perfect calm that I seldom feel.

Once duly elected Mayor, I assigned myself the now-abandoned quarters in a tower with green glass windows overlooking the viscous, roiling waves of the Blueness of Malodors - a place I can be away from the others and have some peace. A lonely, grim sort of accomodations, but they are my only respite.



My first acts as mayor were to make a few restructurings to the military - then, I assigned the Rough

Tightnesses, the Hollow Hammers, and the Paddles of Disembowelment (under the command of such great warriors as Tupu and Mipe) to cancel their standing orders to guard the hospital, and instead to gather and inform the newly appointed soldiers of the Bronze Shoves of their new orders to guard the sea.

Keltiknight and Katsuun were with Flagrarus when he went to inform Takua of his duties. Takua, despite lying in a rubbish heap for the month previous to this, crippled and dying, resisted. And suddenly, the terrible truth behind the riots was clear. No sooner had Takua touched Katsuun, but she too joined in combat against Keltiknight!

```
Katsuun Necikkivish has been fine lately. She has complained about the draft lately. She addired a completely sublime Paved Road lately. She sustained minor injuries recently. She is a casual worshipper of Avuz Silverycopper and an ardent worshipper of Pikk the blueness of Fickers. She is a member of The Enchanted Labor of Treaties. She is a former member of The Sword of Boots. She is an enemy of The Sword of Boots. She is an enemy of The Sword of Boots. She is an enemy of The Sword of Boots. She is an enemy of The Sword of Boots. She is a complained about the draft lately. He admired a completely sublime Paved Road lately. He admired a completely sublime Paved Road lately. He is a worshipper of Kigok Pakercooks. He is a citizen of The Sword of Boots. He is a former member of The Enchanted labor of Treaties. He is an enemy of The Enchanted Labor of Treaties.
```

This was no mere rebellion, but possession at the hands of the demon-queen and her servitors! This "Enchanted Labor of Treaties" were her mind-slaves, infesting our fortress! I shouted for the military to retreat at once... but soon, DuckThatQuacks was emerging from below, and I heard the sounds of battle coming from the Hospital. Greader had been hiding in a food stockpile nearby for days, waiting for the guard to be distracted. He was locked in battle with Elderont - good. Elderont was capable, he should make short work of Greader, gods willing. While Keltiknight beat Takua senseless with a silver flask, below we heard the constant clang of DuckThatQuacks axe against poor unconscious lupusater's helm... Lupusater, who somehow managed to escape the entire affair unscathed, despite quite literally DAYS of being bashed by Duck.

```
battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metals the Axedwarf hacks The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but battle axe') but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith in the head with her battle axe') but battle axe
```

Takua finally succumbed to the beating, with neither of the two guardsmen affected by Led's curse. Katsuun was struck down by a swift blow from ThatAussieDwarf's pick, on her way to the sea.

```
The Wrestler punches The Aspiring Noble in the left lower arm with her right hand bruising the muscle through the x(cow leather cloak)x!

The Wrestler attacks The Aspiring Noble but He jumps away!

The Wrestler kicks The Aspiring Noble in the left hand with her right foot! bruising the muscle through the x(giant cave spider silk left mitten)x!

The Wrestler strikes at The Aspiring Noble but the shot is blocked!

The Aspiring Noble counterstrikes!

The Aspiring Noble strikes The Wrestler in the lower body with his madamantine pick!

Hadamantine pick!

Hadamanting her guts!

An artery has been opened by the attack!

Katsuun Necikkivish Wrestler has bied to death.
```

Flagrarus, however, had been infected by the curse, and soon joined in combat with ThatAussieDwarf as well. That left Duck and Greader - ever the most dangerous of the lot.

Elderont never managed to rouse from his sleep as Greader beat him with the butt of his crossbow, but lay there peacefull as he was thumped for perhaps a week, as if the crushing blows were naught but taps. I consider him a hero for serving as so effective a distraction.

```
*The Marksdwarf bashes The Brewer in the head with her (*bronze crossbow*) bruising the muscle and fracturing the skull!
The Marksdwarf bashes The Brewer in the head with her (*bronze crossbow*) bruising the muscle and fracturing the skull!
The Marksdwarf bashes The Brewer in the head with her (*bronze Page 18/18 FPS: 100 (49)

The Marksdwarf bashes The Brewer in the head with her (*bronze crossbow*) bruising the muscle and shattering the skull!
The Marksdwarf bashes The Brewer in the head with her (*bronze crossbow*) bruising the muscle and shattering the skull!
The Marksdwarf bashes The Brewer in the head with her (*bronze crossbow*) bruising the muscle and shattering the skull!
```

Greader then moved on to fight Mipe - who also seemed unable to rouse. The surviving military immediately scrambled, and a bloodbath ensued in the hospital. Greader was struck down - but not before spreading the curse again - somehow all the way to Ledi, who was on her way to assist. I ordered the military to withdraw, again, and hole up in the hospital. Unlike the battle that we fought there, we could afford to let this play out.

Elsewhere, The True Mekboy, coming to help the rest in the hospital, chanced across Duck, still beating Lupusater, and unfortunately attracted his attention. Mekboy died swiftly, and Duck resumed what was rapidly becoming his full time profession. Lupusater was dreaming peacefully.

```
Attend Meeting

That Russie Dwarf Lirmonom Aspiring Noble
No Job

Tupu Ostral Katthir Dumat Champion
Conduct Meeting
Catalyst Tirslektad Elven Studies Major
```

I, meanwhile, was meeting with ThatAussieDwarf. Discussing... strategy. Well, an exit strategy, at least. I figured if anyone here had an emergency get-the-hell-out-of-dodge plan in reserve for situations like this, it would be him. And lo, he did have a plan! One... slightly too convoluted to spell out here, but... Well. It starts like this:

```
It has started raining Catalyst Tiristlektad Elven Studies Major has imposed a ban on certain exports

Mandates: Export of cave spider silk items Prohibited
```

I think you can imagine the rest.

Both Ledi and Duck continue to stab ineffectually at their opponents adamantine helms. The fort is at an impasse for now... And my !!plan!! is at a standstill.

```
helm: Teps: 100 (49)

helm: The Aredwarf hacks The Metalsmith in the head with her (*adamantine battle axe.) but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith s *adamantine helm: *The Aredwarf hacks The Metalsmith in the head with her (*adamantine battle axe.) but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith s *adamantine battle axe.) but the attack is deflected by The Metalsmith s *adamantine helm:

| This might be meant keraly. | Startal Kilnudnungk (*stangalkkir uvar hac become a Hyddwart lupusater Nun roddom Metalsmith has grown attached to a adamantine helm:
```

several pages are torn out, lost to the madness of the fortress

- Entry 12 -

My little uprising is going surprisingly well, but a setback has occured; Catalyst was elected Mayor during the emergency election. This complicates matters. I'll have to see if he can be manipulated as easily as the rest of this demented fortress...

- Entry 13 -

Katsuun recognised that i was a citizen of The Sword of Boots today. Last time i attempt to be social and show off our people's traditional greeting. I mean, who doesn't like being shaken by the neck

while being yelled at as a greeting?! I managed to gut her with my pick before she could tell the other dissidents. Unfortunately, I think Flagarus heard her scream. I'll make up a story about them attacking me later....

- Entry 14 -

Good news, Journal! Catalyst asked me to meet with him in order to work out how to save the fortress. He may have mumbled something about "getting out of this armok-saken demonic hole" as well, which only bodes well for my designs. I made up some overly complex scheme and told him to follow it to the letter, starting with the seemingly-innocuous ban on exporting silk. With luck, he'll either leave or be dead before he even gets to the part about running naked wearing a sock for a hat at the dissidents as a sign of good faith.

Journal of Catalyst, Elven Studies Major - 23rd Slate 535

Kaamanen, the Combat Surgeon, our Chief Medical Dwarf, died in the hospital of infection. With the others in the state they are in I have relieved Aik of his guard to bring water and food. It may be the only hope of keeping some alive. I am also selecting, one by one, the most able-bodied possession-free dwarves remaining and bringing them to my tower. I do not intend to abandon the others, but as a course of last resort, a few dwarves could weather the storm from the safety of this moderately well-provisioned structure.

I summoned Darvi but he blundered right into Ledi... and quickly knocked her unconscious! He's now throttling the life out of her - even if this leads to Darvi being possessed, it will be easier to steer him where I need him than Ledi, I think. Meanwhile, Duck has now filled 94 pages of smacking lupusater on the head with the axe, still without actually hurting him. I actually can't figure out why lupusater stays unconscious, he's apparently been "Resting" off a couple broken ribs for the past month.

The lockdown has prevented murders, but the insurrection is not the only killer lurking behind these walls. Injury, disease, and starvation creep in at every corner. First Kaamanen, our Chief Medical Dwarf, succumbed to infection in his sickbed. This prompted me to allow Aik is to take the risk of provision-gathering, but still, in rapid succession Gilgameshclone and Uristein, then Mipe, and then Nightmarebros succumbed to thirst. Aik managed to feed and water the remaining few, but many of them may be beyond saving.



Meanwhile, Sprout is apparently stuck in a room way down in the caverns, starving. I told him to deconstruct the pump that's blocking him in (I think I am undoing someone's project, but well, fix it later if you care) but he won't do that til he finishes hunting vermin in his tiny 3x3 stone cell. Poor bastard. What a sad state of affairs, provisions enough to keep us all fat for decades, but starving and dehydrating nonetheless.



The possessed dwarves are blocking most of our number from our supplies, but there are enough provisions in my tower for me, and several others. In the hopes that I might spare at least some of my brethren their fate, I summoned several of the more healthy and not-possessed dwarves to share my sanctum. Darvi immediately blundered into Ledi on his way to me, and is now busy strangling her. Even if this ends badly, it might at least end the roadblock keeping Ledi from where I need her perhaps even if Darvi ends up possessed, he will prove more tractable.

Meanwhile, DuckThatQuacks is still raining ineffectual blows on the head of lupusater (over a hundred pages worth!) who somehow has still suffered no injury. He simply lies there, as he has done all month, "resting", and Duck apparently never grows tired of beating him. I assigned Duck the now-abandoned nearby quarters, hoping that if he ever relents we can lock the door behind him forever, but so far he continues the beating unabated. Lupusater, apparently, is just waiting for his broken ribs to heal before he rises to defend himself.

LordSlowpoke was the first of my summons to arrive. I gave the boy a much needed ration of food and dwarven wine, and how does that little brat repay me? He throws a tantrum, rampaging through my food stockpiles! He destroyed a farmers workshop, part of the old cheese-making facilities, before he calmed down. Sometimes I wonder if these creatures are worth saving.

Deep below the earth, I managed to locate a lone miner, Karakzon. I have made plans to dig emergency tunnels connecting the safe tower and a legendary dining room/stockpile far below. If we succeed in time, we may have a safe section of the fortress at last.



But it was at that moment I heard the roaring of a hundred guttural voices outside our walls. A vile force of darkness had arrived! I immediately directed dwarves to close the gates... but not one of them remembers HOW! There are too many levers in this place, too much complexity to function. Fortunately, they do seem to remember how to release the floodgates and enable the pumps. I order Grov to do so, and rush down myself to do my best to save the remaining poor bastards in the hospital. It is foolish, I know, but I cannot listen to their anguished minds any more - they have become too much to bear.

I... for some reason I find myself compelled to go release a troll from its cage. The Demon Queen has invaded my mind too!

I fought her, as hard as I could. But by the time I shook off the command, the goblins had begun to pour into our gates, Grov was too late. The cages captured some, but there were too many, and soon they would pour into the main fort. I ordered Tupu and the others to scramble to our defense - but it may already be too late.



It seems the fateful hour of Failcannon is now at hand... and I will write again soon, to record what befell.

As we enjoyed some of the truly excellent cheeses left by the late Strategia in our stockpile, "Keltiknight" haltingly began to tell me something he had been keeping secret. Apparently he and Katsuun had played a little joke on me, during our trip - you see, he was really Katsuun, and the now deceased "Katsuun" was indeed Keltiknight. For obvious reasons, he felt it was a big awkward to bring this up now.



We are hard at work constructing fortifications around the tower, a solid wall to block us in, made from the only material available - goblin bone. The chaos still rages all around us. We stay close to the tower as much as possible for the sake of safety, but we have all been stricken by a strange sort of confusion, even myself. Perhaps I have been taxing my abilities too hard, trying to not only read,

but direct so many, amidst this madness. Even though I know there are important things to do, I find myself wandering off, enjoying mist baths, or acquiring lovely new pig tail fiber dresses. I cannot focus, and I accomplish little. It is as if the madness that has infected so many still gnaws at the minds of the rest of us.

```
Aik Dumattad Keshan Catten Captain of the Guard has bled to death diorite Floor Hatch destroyed by Asno Troll
LordSlowpoke Tathzefon Magnificent Bastard has bled to death schist Floor Hatch destroyed by Ngerxung Troll
Mormota Tishisoslan Marksdwarf has been struck down
Xenos Nomal?rith Vathezistbarvim S/d has become a Speardwarf diorite Floor Hatch destroyed by Smunstu Troll
Glacial Kilrudnunok Gystangrikkir Uvar Apprentice Mage has been struck down
schist Floor Hatch destroyed by Ozud Troll
arcangelsd Nakasrigith Farmer has been struck down
Schist Floor Hatch destroyed by Mmxu Troll
diorite Floor Hatch destroyed by Mmxu Troll
diorite Floor Hatch destroyed by Amxu Troll
That Russie Dwarf Lyrmonom Aspiring Noble has bled to death
diorite Floor Hatch destroyed by Bxx Troll
schist Floor Hatch destroyed by Bxx Troll
Schist Floor Hatch destroyed by Strost Troll
Schist Floor Hatch destroyed by Strost Troll
Darvi Kabgusil Gem Cutter has been struck down
Seraphin Eribnynub Homicidal Poker has died from thirst
The weather has cleared
```

Several more have died. First, Sprout was too weak to dig his way out of his tiny stone prison, and gave in to thirst. Then, Aik met the goblins as they came over the bridge, and was soon cut down for his trouble. LordSlowpoke, the poor foolish child, made it out of my sight and ran straight into them as well. Several more followed, falling to the goblins one by one. At the very least, the distraction they provided managed to keep the goblins confined to the courtyard long enough for Tupu to arrive.

Tupu made short work of several goblins. I tried not to view his mind too carefully, but what I saw... looked like this. It seems Tupu did not bring any weapons to the battle. This might seem like poor preparation, but I saw his mind. He wanted them to suffer. I never thought I would see a dwarf tear off a goblin's head with his teeth.

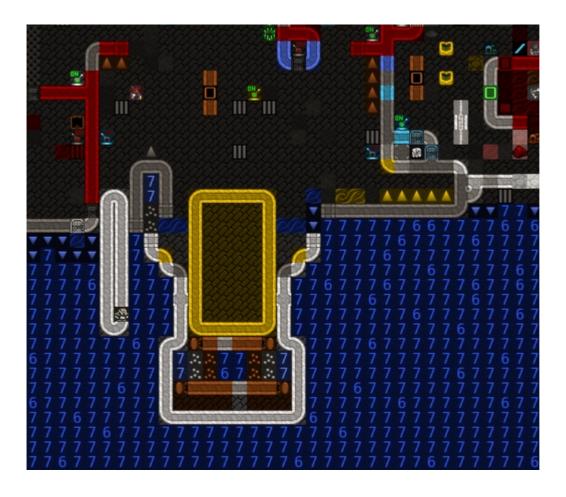
```
The Goblin Pikeman attacks The Champion but He jumps away!
The Champion bites The Goblin Pikeman in the lower body bruising the muscle and bruising the guts through the ((naked mole dog leather cloak))!
The Goblin Pikeman looks sick!
The Champion latters on firmy!
The Champion latters on firmy!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Pikeman around by the lower body tearing apart the lower body s fat!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Pikeman around by the lower body tearing apart the lower body s fat!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Pikeman in the lower body bruising the muscle and bruising the guts through the ((naked mole dog leather love))
The Champion latters on firmly!
The Champion latters on firmly!
The Goblin Pikeman misses The Champion!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Pikeman in the head with his left foot bruising the muscle and shattering the skull through the ((rhesus macaque leather hood))!
The Champion latters on firmly!
The Champion latters on firmly in The Goblin Pikeman in the head bruising the muscle leather hood)!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Pikeman in the head bruising the muscle the Champion shakes The Goblin Pikeman around by the throat!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Pikeman in the head with his left foot bruising the muscle jamming the skull through the brain and tearing apart the throat!
The Champion hatches on firmly to The Goblin Pikeman around by the throat!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Hammerman by the fifth toe right foot with his right lower arm!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Hammerman by the fifth toe right foot with his right lower arm!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Hammerman by the fifth toe right foot with his right lower arm!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Hammerman by the fifth toe right foot!
The Champion shakes The Goblin Hammer
```

The most disturbing part? I think he was doing it because he was HUNGRY. He singlehandedly mopped up the few goblins who had made it into the courtyard, and then when I sent him off for a meal, and to pick up the masterwork silver hammer and adamantine helm dropped by Aik, he succumbed to infection. Rest in peace Tupu - another great hero of Failcannon.

The others were not so glorious - many of the dwarves in the hospital finally succumbed to dehydration:

```
dolomite Floor Grate destroyed by Ngerxung Troll
It is now summer
Tupu Ostral Katthir Dumat has become a militia commander
Karakzon Olonbisek Miner has been struck down
Tupu Ostral Katthir Dumat Champion has succumbed to infection
mica Statue toppled by Stroost Troll
→ DorvenEngineering Amkintirist Miner has died from thirst
```

Things were looking grim indeed, and I decided what must be done. We had finally managed to accomplish a few important tasks. Ledi was unconscious at the edge of the Dwarven Diving Board waiting for the lever to be pulled.



Lupusater finally died - I felt him slip away peacefully from the world, without a scratch despite the long beating, DuckThatQuacks gave him. Apparently exhausted, I was easily able to egg Duck into retiring to the luxurious new bedroom I assigned him - and as planned. the doors locked securely behind him. But now there's a most odd smell coming from within.



We also managed to seal the main gate, but not before eight trolls made their way in. Fortunately, they had stopped to destroy the trade depot before going further (its always the Trade Depot in this place, isn't it?) Deciding that desperate times require desperate measures, I made my way to it.

There was a lever... one I swore never to pull unless all else seemed doomed. The label said "Never Ever." I entered, steeled my resolve, and then I did it. I threw the Never-Ever-Lever.



In my defense, I didn't know what would happen. I had hoped perhaps it would collapse the entire courtyard, killing me, yes, but taking the trolls with me. The fort would be safe then - but no. A wall dropped, and our imprisoned Ettin, worked into a fury by the near-constant spear-pokings it had endured under Aik, charged out at me roaring, and chased me all the way back into my tower, and cornered me in my bedroom. Not knowing what else to do, I bellowed and took a swing at it! This surprised the beast just enough for me to dash past it and get away.

The beast lay in wait in my apartments until Karakzon, apparently wishing to meet with me, blundered past - whereupon it charged out again and chased Karakzon all the way back to the main courtyard again. Let him be remembered as a hero - though he inflicted but one small wound on the Ettin in the process, he did exactly the right thing. He ran to the trade depot, and there he stopped and made his stand. Though he perished soon, the Ettin caught sight of the trolls. His rage was not spent, and immediately he laid about him - wreaking havoc on the invaders.

```
ine Ettin shakes The Troll around by the thumb right hand and the sievered part sails off is a pred the property and premains in The Ettins quiet he followed with her ((giant oim leadher) that itten) bruising the muscle through the ((giant oim leadher) tood)?

The Ettin strikes The Troll in the right lower arm with her ((giant oim leather clock) in the clock of the country of the muscle through the ((large cave spider silk the clock) in the clock of the cl
```

At this moment I decided to go make a nice calf-skull totem. I had the nagging feeling this was NOT the urgent thing I needed to be doing, but, nonetheless. I felt... compelled. Something was off, in my mind, and I couldn't say what exactly. But as so many times before, I found I was not myself.

Suddenly, I became aware of new minds in my vicinity. Migrants! At last! Just four... no... three. But nonetheless, new, sane dwarves!

```
Some migrants have arrived despite the danger

Dishmab Vishmerul Weaver Zon Atissazir Herbalist

Zon Atissazir Herbalist

Zon Stakebridges

Zon Stakebridges

No Job

Novice Herbalist

Novice Gem Setter

Novice Presser

Stray Donkey Foal (Tame)

Ilral Srithlut Lye Maker

Novice Weaver

Adequate Lye Maker

Novice Observer
```

Unfortunately they will need to stay outside the gate until it is safe to open once again. The Ettin did a fine job on the trolls, but finally the last two, bruised and battered, managed to put it down. They are in a remote corner of our halls, now. Just sitting there. I decided to unleash DuckThatQuacks on them, but on his way to get his axe he ran across the fallen body of Megaman3321, and laid into him once again. He had been laying in the hallway, conscious but immobile, waiting for someone to bring him a crutch. I was actually coming with one myself, when I saw Duck beating him. Needless to say, I fled. I am no fighter.

Many more gave in to thirst - First Flagrarus finally expired. Somewhere in a stockpile deep below I felt his light wink out, followed shortly by Xenos. The last of the demon-possessed insurrectionists are Ledi and DuckThatQuacks - she's still unconscious at the edge of the diving board waiting for someone to pull the damn lever. Why will no one pull it!? Katsuun and I both have tried, and we both get distracted and wander off as soon as we get close. I am starting to thing the presence of the demon-queen is muddling our heads, to protect her servants. Most disturbing.

I wish I could use my abilities to banish her influence - but her powers are magical, infernal in nature. My abilities are something else. The elves say they flow from nature - as worthless an explanation as any the elves give. For many decades I studied the elves and their traditions, to better understand my talent, as much as I loathed the experience. They always insisted that it was not magic, however it might appear. And it seems they were right. Led's powers were still not something I could comprehend, any more than any other mortal mind.

At long last, Duck finished choking the life from Megaman3321, and has stalked off to deal with the two trolls. He never did pick up his axe, yet he's doing admirably nonetheless! It guess beating on two immortal, unconscious people for months on end is the best training.

I have decided it is important that Katsuun and I arm and equip ourselves. We have been wandering the winding corridors of the fortress looking for suitable equipment. So far I have selected an adamantine short sword for myself. It sits by my side now, as I write tonight's entry. Though I have been unable to focus on finding any armor, this sword... it called to me. It cut through my muddied thoughts and... **spoke** to me. I felt its presence in my mind, like a dull roar of incomprehensible voices... yet somehow comforting.

"YOU WILL SERVE THE QUEEN NOW"

```
Catalyst Tiristlektad has been quite content lately. She has witnessed death. She had a truly decadent drink lately. She had a nice bath recently. She admired a fine Restraint lately she ate a pretty decent meal lately. She had a wonderful drink lately. She admired own completely sublime firmor Stand lately. She has been satisfied at work lately. She made a satisfying squisition lately she has disquistion lately. She has disquistion lately she has complained about the draft specified at the standard lately she has complained about the draft she is a faithful worshipper of the Blueness of Flickers and a faithful worshipper of the Blueness of Flickers and a faithful worshipper of she is a member of the Sword of Boots. She is a nember of the Sword of She is an enemy of the Sword of Boots. She is an enemy of the Sword of Boots. She is the mayor of the Enchanted Labor of Treaties.

The Elven Studies Major attacks The Glassmaker but He jumps away!
```

From a blood-soaked journal

- Entry 1, Book 2 -

I swapped clothes with one of the poor saps that fell to the goblins and it seemed to work - they all think I'm dead. I altered my hair and slipped out of the fortress only to run into three dwarves coming towards the fort (something about "fleeing the ruins of Led's empire"). Knowing they'd probably mention me, i made a deal with one of them - let me pose as one of them and the other can get the hell out of this crazy hellhole (I swear, Catalyst is psychic about who and where we are, or something...). The husband agreed and legged it faster than i've ever seen a sane dwarf move. On the plus side; I've gained an attractive wife (though her voice seems oddly deep and i swear i saw stubble. Odd...) and no-one's the wiser as to who i am. Catalyst keeps calling me "Other" though, for some reason i cant fathom....

Journal of Catalyst, Elven Studies Major

I am not myself.

In rare moments of lucidity, when I am able to wrest control of my body from the demon queen, I

record the happenings in this fort in this journal. It is my sole comfort, here in my lonely tower overlooking a poisoned, frigid sea.



When I first broke free of the Queen's will, I immediately locked myself in my tower room. It is my only remaining hope to save the others. I will die of thirst soon, I imagine. All our hopes rest on Katsuun. And those hopes are growing fainter by the day.

```
Katsuun Uzoledan has been fine lately He admired a fine Glass Window lately He brought somebody to bed lately He has been haunted by the dead lately He has witnessed death He has complained about the draft lately He made a satisfying acquisition lately He has complained of the lack of chairs lately He was caught in the rain recently He had a nice bath recently He was disgisted by a miasme lately He sustained major injuries recently He had a nice bath recently He say succeeding the sustained major injuries recently He say the say of the sound of
```

I was awakened tonight by the crushing waves of his anguish. It seems DuckThatQuacks grew bored of pummeling the trolls, while I was not myself, and wandered to Katsuun's bed to deliver him a vicious beating. Oh the horror... it lasted hours.

I managed to steer Duck back towards his intended targets, but Katsuun lies broken and suffering. I think he will recover, given time, but whether he is able to care for himself in the meantime... It does not look good.

As a result, I have gently prodded the minds of the dwarves trapped outside. Mormota II has armed himself with the same adamantine battleax arcangelsd was reclining upon when I first arrived, and they have begun the process of tunneling through the wall into the fort. Perhaps they can do what is needed.

Just as I steered him away however, I heard a great crash from outside my tower.

```
A gigantic eyeless serpent It has a spiral shell and it appears to be emaciated Its amber scales are large and set far apart Beware its deadly blood!

Jet Oper destroyed by Darkul Forgotten Beast mica Slab toppled by Darkul Forgotten Beast +Soap Maker's Workshop toppled by Darkul Forgotten Beast Horkshop toppled by Darkul Forgotten Beast
```

Oh Armok help me, no... It's happening. I feel her, like hands closing my throat! No, noooooo... *the rest of the page is covered in wild lines, splashes of ink, and babbling frantically scrawled gibberish in no mortal tongue.*

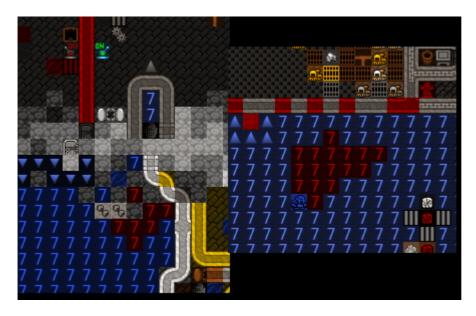
Journal of Led Shakeoars, Mistress of You Sorry Lot

I'll never understand the purpose of these diaries you pathetic creatures insist on keeping. "A historical record!" you say. A record of mediocrity and ruin. "So that we will not be forgotten!" You've only proved that you should be. "So future generations can learn!" Learn how to suck as badly as you? Well, you may have achieved that last, I'll grant.

With my beast loosed on the fortress, I distracted Duck from the defense by steering him off to his bedchamber. Let him sleep while the fortress burns! AHAHAHAH! But... apparently that meddling Catalyst had rigged his door to lock again the instant he stepped through. No matter - we will figure out what to do about Duck once other matters are resolved. It was at this very moment that the migrants - this accursed fort's last, best hope, broke through the outer wall. Dirku waited merely a stone's throw away, lazily destroying a bridge with its mighty tail. My hour had come, at last.

But at the last moment, the hammering stopped! The migrants shifted to another wall - one blocked off from my reach. Catalyst had called them into the tower! I heard them shuffling about, next to me. Ohhh the maddening sound. It plagues me even now - they are so close, and yet I cannot reach out to throttle them.

That Other Aussie Dwarf just muttered to one of the others something about a "!!plan!!" he had made with Catalyst that he needed to go fulfil. What on earth...



No!! My faithful servant!!

If you should find this journal, midget freaks, know that you've only prolonged your suffering, by your insolence.

Journal of Catalyst, Elven Studies Major

We did it! That Other Aussie Dwarf is too lazy to do anything else he's asked, but he, finally, of all the dwarves in this fort, managed to pull that damn lever and dump Ledi in the sea! Bizarrely, I can still

hear her thoughts echoing in the deep... she seems to be sustained by the same demonic energy that corrupted her. I shudder to think of it.

The migrants are hard at work setting up this tower into a viable safehouse, and oh, I wish so fondly I could open that door and join them. But I have explained to them that they mustn't let me out. Soon, this fortress may be theirs.

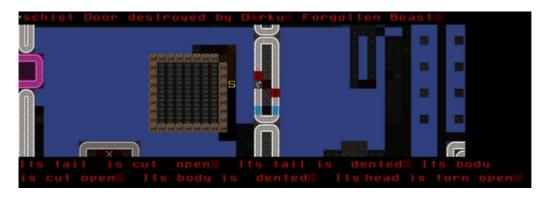
I have unleashed Duck once more, now that they are safe, and it seems she has also taken unnatural strength from Led. She cracked the skulls of both trolls in short order, then immediately set off after Dirku!

```
The Forgotten Beast misses The Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast misses The Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast misses The Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast in the head with her right foot bruising the muscle!
The Forgotten Beast in the body with her left foot bruising the muscle!
The Forgotten Beast in the body with her left foot bruising the muscle of the forgotten Beast in the body with her left foot bruising the muscle of the forgotten Beast in the body with her left foot bruising the muscle of the forgotten Beast in the body with her left forgotten Beast misses the Forgotten Beast in the body with her left forgotten Beast collides with the Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast collides with the Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast collides with the Elite Wrestler bruises the Forgotten Beast in the head tearing the forgotten Beast collides with the Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast collides with The Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast collides with The Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast misses The Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast collides with The Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast misses The Elite Wrestler!
The Forgotten Beast collides with The Elit
```

On and on they fought, ascending upward through the battlements of Failcannon, fighting upon the tower of doors!



...which may have been a poor decision on Duck's part. But, she was unfazed! Immediately, she charged to the fore, once again... only to faint halfway there, as the unnatural strength left him. Dirku, meanwhile, set to work dismantling the tower of doors, looking somewhat the worse for wear.



Hearing the anguished cries of its kin, another ancient horror began to stir deep in the caverns... far from us, thankfully.



Duck lies there peacefully asleep now. I will let this report on her current state speak for itself.



* * *

What ... in blazes?!

Somehow, Led seems to have freed me from my room. I woke to find myself STANDING ON THE OUTER WALLS of Failcannon.



On my way to lock myself back in, the Queen compelled me to lash out at a passing Aussie Dwarf, but he had the good sense to jump away. I was starving, and could not resist snagging a few barrels of food for myself on the way back. The newcomers would have plenty - not only had Mormota secured a new passage to the underground, but a human caravan had just arrived! Even if the guards cannot fight off the beast, I have no doubt they will drop plenty of delicious provisions for us.

Speaking of which... ever since this whole possession thing, occassionally I have the _strangest_ cravings

```
*Catalyst Tiristlektad Queen Led's Mindslave has mandated the construction of certain goods.

Holdings: Office Decent Quarters Decent Dining Room Needs: 1 Cablinets Needs: 1 Cablinet Needs: 1 Reapon Rack Needs: 1 Homor Stand

Mandates: Make swordfish bone items (3/3)
```

In other news, I seem to have managed to strike That Aussie Dwarf again, and infect him. Well, at least I am not the only one slowly starving in my room now. Ledi finally drowned, and Dirku for now remains content to keep tearing apart the doors. One of the caravan guards started taking potshots at it, and soon, it fell! Dirku's blood now decorates the Tower of Doors! I'll have to have someone set up a butcher's shop - we'll eat well for some time now.

Now that the fortress is safe again, I've claimed the whole of the western tower for myself. The others will do fine with the whole of Failcannon at their disposal. All three of them - Mormota, the badly-injured Katsuun, and Erica. Now to simply let Aussie, Duck, and myself die.



Journal of Led Shakeoars, Demon Queen

That fool Mormota blundered by my faithful servant DuckThatQuacks today. I finally sprung my trap - Despite his legs, broken in one and three places, respectively - he stood and attacked! To my great frustration, however, Mormota managed to escape without a scratch. Now I've tipped my hand and the midget freaks won't come anywhere near the surface for fear of him. To relieve a little of my frustration, I decided to tag along with a local haunt.

The Stray Dog (Tame) has been scared to death by the Ghostly Mason Magentawolf Dod≧ktarmid!

HAH! Oh I do love puppies - for their whimpering.

It seems the blows Duck aimed at Mormota, despite being dodged, allowed me a foothold on another dwarf, Erica III. She was meanwhile carrying the poor disabled Katsuun, her new prey. So, the doctor immediately picked a fight with the patient she was carrying to bed - the results were predictable, though not immediately fatal.

I have directed my new servants deep below to work on something of a... special surprise. They shall lay in wait, until the time is ripe. Unfortunately they have a few rivalries themselves.

```
The Scheming Mastermindinddd punches The Glassmaker in the head with his right hand bruising the muscle and bruising the neck muscle through the (giant bat leather hood)! The Scheming Mastermindinddd punches The Glassmaker in the head with his right hand bruising the muscle through the (giant bat leather hood)! The Scheming Mastermindinddd releases the grip of The Scheming Mastermindinddd releases the grip of The Scheming Hastermindinddd punches The Glassmaker in the head with his left hand bruising the muscle through the (giant bat leather hood)! The Scheming Mastermindinddd punches The Glassmaker in the head with his left hand bruising the muscle through the (giant bat leather hood)! The Scheming Mastermindinddd punches The Glassmaker in the head with his right hand bruising the muscle through the (giant bat leather hood)! The Scheming Mastermindinddd punches The Glassmaker in the head with his right hand bruising the muscle through the (giant bat leather hood)! The Oueen Led's Mindslave punches The Scheming Mastermindinddd in the right upper leg with her left hand bruising the skin through the (pig tail fiber cloak)!

The Scheming Mastermindinddd punches The Queen Led's Mindslave in the left upper leg with his right hand bruising the fat through the (pig tail fiber cloak)!

The Oueen Led's Mindslave punches The Scheming Mastermindinddd in the left toot with her left hand bruising the muscle through the (pig tail fiber cloak)!

The Oueen Led's Mindslave punches The Scheming Mastermindinddd in the left foot with her left hand bruising the muscle through the (pig tail fiber cloak)!
```

Journal of Catalyst, Elven Studies Major

I have been gone too long, this time.

I was jolted awake by a savage pummeling from that other Aussie dwarf. His face contorted with rage, he simply laid into me with blow after blow - I was able to flee and lock the door of my tower in the nick of time... As I was busy vesting myself with stronger armor against future attacks, I felt another light wink out in the fort. Duckthatquacks, having dragged his crippled body slowly across the entire courtyard to the ruins of the Bridge he used to be master of, apparently seeking to drink from the Blueness, died of thirst. May future generations remember the dwarf he used to be, and not what he became. May it be so for us all.

With this thought I was inspired. I took up my new shield... and went off to save Katsuun.

```
The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield*-) bruising the muscle through the Cnaked mole dog leather hood)!

The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield*-) bruising the muscle through the Cnaked mole dog leather hood)!

The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield*-) bruising the muscle and bruising the neck's muscle through the (naked mole dog leather hood)!

The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield*-) bruising the muscle through the Cnaked mole dog leather hood)!

The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield*-) bruising the muscle through the (naked mole dog leather hood)!

The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield*-) bruising the muscle through the (naked mole dog leather hood)!

The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield**-) bruising the muscle and bruising the neck's muscle through the (naked mole dog leather hood)!

The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield**-) bruising the muscle and bruising the neck's muscle through the (naked mole dog leather hood)!

The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield**-) bruising the muscle through the (naked mole dog leather hood)!

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The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield**-) bruising the muscle through the (naked mole dog leather hood)!

The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the head with her (-**steel shield**-) bruising the muscle through the (naked mole dog leather hood)!

The Glassmaker bites The Insane Hermit in the right upper leg b
```

After a few dozen solid blows to the head, she dropped the poor soul. I am sorry to say I was forced to let him lie there. I beat Erica down the stairs and soon laid her unconscious... and then came Katsuun down the stairs to join the fray! I shook my head and left off.

```
The Queen Led's Mindslave strikes The Insane Hermit in the left lower leg with her (-**steel shield**)! bruising the fat through the (donkey leather dress)!

The Insane Hermit breaks the grip of The Glassmaker supper front tooth from The Insane Hermit's head!

The Insane Hermit gives in to pain!

The Insane Hermit falls over!

The Glassmaker bites The Insane Hermit in the head bruising the muscle and bruising the meck!s muscle through the (naked mole dog leather hood)!

The Glassmaker latches on firmly to The Insane Hermit's throat!

The Glassmaker shakes The Insane Hermit around by the throat tearing apart the throat!

A major artery in the throat has been opened by the attack!

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The Glassmaker shakes The Insane Hermit by been opened by the attack!
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There is no hope for this lot anymore. Mormota is our last hope. I have clad myself in adamantine and begun to train in my tower. If I hope to keep him alive, I may need to throw myself in harms way some day. Best be ready. Meanwhile, Led's will seems to have drawn Aussie deep into the bowels of the earth. I know not what he does, down below... And I shudder to imagine. I have sealed off the tunnels. He can have them, far to the southeast. I will keep my western tower. I have locked Katsuun in his room to recover or die, it makes no matter. The fort belongs to Mormota now.

Mormota soon had the breach in the wall sealed, thus protecting Failcannon from the fell beasts lurking in of the Blueness of Malodors once again. He sealed the trade entrance, and just moments before he closed the main gate... Migrants!

```
Dariush IV Zumbakust Merciless Avenger

Dariush IV Hameurged*

No Job
Proficient Marksdwarf
Competent Armor User
Proficient Archer
Competent Dodger
Talented Leatherworker
Proficient Observer

Mekboy the Third Dastottulon Professional Span
Mekboy the Third Dastottulo
Mekboy the Third Swordroad

No Job
Novice Miner
Adequate Wood Cutter
Novice Engraver
Novice Strand Extractor
Talented Pump Operator
Urist The Third Datankesh
Urist The Third Datankesh
Urist The Third Irontails*

No Job
Novice Wood Cutter
Skilled Fish Cleaner
Talented Siege Engineer
```

This is incredible! Things are being built! Bodies are being buried! Everyone is healthy and FOLLOWING ORDERS!!!!!!

Oh, how I wish I could be among them. There are tears in my eyes.

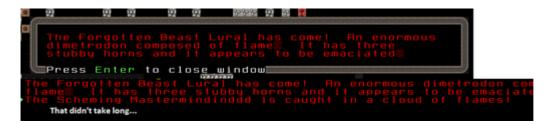
Katsuun died of thirst in his quarters, unable to reach the food and booze stockpile just outside due to his broken feet. Aussie is digging deep into the bowels of the earth and seems to be going strong... though I have no idea what he will eat. Maybe, just maybe, he'll survive. Failcannon is

starting to show signs of order again. I never thought I'd live to see the day.

I lay down the pen for now. I must return to my training. But I am optimistic for the future of this fort. Failcannon is alive again - for the first time since I came here, it is not dying a slow death of disease, injury, and neglect. For the first time it is not fighting itself. Failcannon has begun anew.

Journal of Led Shakeoars, Demon Queen

It seems even the beasts of the underworld have turned against me.



My plan to ruin this fort had only just begun. These beasts make poor allies. Aussie was a wily one, I had thought he might stand a chance of escape, or even victo ry...

But no.

Curses upon Failcannon everything to do with it, for all eternity. My last hope is to break Catalyst to my will... a task she is making most difficult.

But it is only a matter of time. Remember that. I am coming.

- Journal Entry 16 -

Yet again, I've faked my death. This one was awful close though. Who would've thought they'd believe a few underpaid humans in a bad costume with a flamethrower was really an eldricht forgotten horror?

I've tunneled out of the Fortress grounds and I'm now looking for the next group of poor fools eager to seek new intresting ways to die lives in Failcannon. The burns from that over-eager bunch of human idiots should keep Catalyst and the migrants from recognising me.... I will have control of Failcannon and it's adamantine wealth...

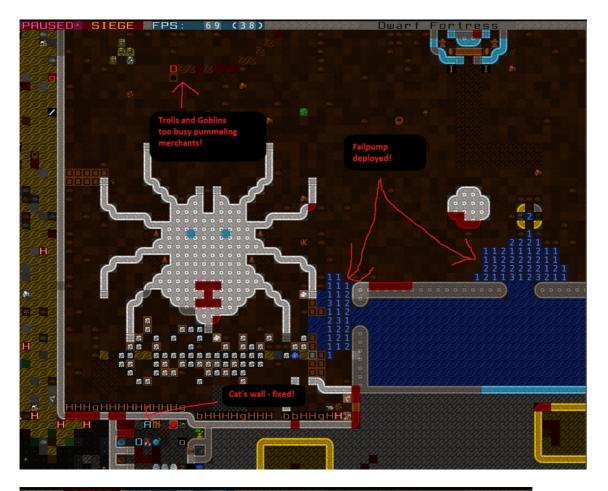
Journal of Catalyst, Elven Studies Major-turned-Overseer-turned-Pariah

No sooner had the fort begun to relax, and I had opened the wall to my tower in the interest of making some improvements outside, when the Goblins struck again.



I breathed a sigh of relief knowing, at least, the main gate was closed. The other four should have been safe. I mobilized my 'squad' consisting of myself, alone, which I have dubbed "The Noiseless Coal" - for I sit in darkness and silence providing warmth to the fortress - and made to repair my wall. Mentally, I reached out to Mekboy and impressed upon him the idea that pulling a certain lever was much more important than any other tasks he might see at hand. I now depart to see this through. It may be my last entry - but I can rest at peace with the knowledge that, whether I succeed or fail, this will not be the final record of Failcannon.

Astounding success! The Pump had no trouble flooding the beach. Though it did not drown the goblins, they were unable to approach the fortress against the buffeting waves of foul and frigid salt water. And with winter upon us, I had no doubt they would leave us be soon enough. Some of the trolls had more sense and climbed into the strange tower directly in front of the fortress. We'll deal with those when we come to it, I suppose.





Meanwhile - ghosts come, ghosts go...

- more Forgotten Beasts stir in the caverns below...

```
The Forgotten Beast Unzo Uklaiquob has come! A huge eyeless llama twisted into humanoid form. It squirms and fidgets. Its pale taupe hair is unkempt. Beware its deadly spittle!

Press Enter to close window

The Forgotten Beast Conali Lebovoeface has come! A towering humanoid composed of solid salt. It has a broad horn and it has a bloated body. Beware its deadly dust!

Press Enter to close window.
```

- and a diplomat comes calling, thankfully seperated from the flood and the goblins by a wall. I manage to open the gate for him and let him in. I'm not sure any of the others have caught wind of his presence yet, however. I conducted him into my chambers (suffering a near-miss, or near-hit as the case may be, with Mormota in the process) and discussed the needs of the Fortress.

The meeting went rather long, as I found myself rambling about the history of Failcannon (as I butchered a horse skeleton I had dragged in, and made a few crafts and a totem from its bones). I think I may have scared the poor fellow. In any case, I requested wood and various items of armor, some cheese, and trap components. It is most likely the caravan will perish outside our gates like so many before, anyhow. We may as well acquire the more expensive goods. In the unlikely event that we find ourselves actually _trading_ with them, I have recorded the details of their desired trade goods as well.

After the long hard negotiations, I took a break to listen to the confused bickering of the soggy goblins. The others had begun resetting the Failpump and refilling the reservoir. I had hoped we might trick the goblins into entering the empty floodchamber, seal the enterances and then refill, but it turns our goblins are not that stupid. Pity. Their stymied anguish was nonetheless quite amusing. Enough so that it was some time later I realized I had neglected to actually open the door so our trade liaison could leave.

Afterwards, I cursed myself for not requesting more swordfish bone items! I decreed it was time to abadon my hopes of acquiring more, and be content with holding on to those we already have. I swear, however, that the writ of arrest issued under my authority was an act of Led's manipulation, and not my own doing.

```
Catalyst Tiristlektad Queen Led's Mindslave has ended a mandate Export of swordfish bone items Prohibited

[Dariush IV Kzumbakust Merciless 47 Days in Prison Officer: Mormota II srithlut Heros Younger Brother

Violation of Production Order Injured Party: Catalyst Tiristlektad Queen Led's Mindsl
```

As the cold winter wore on, the soaked goblins departed, and I am left alone with my thoughts once more. I find myself brooding on poor Urist. It is clear that I cannot go on as the overseer of this fort in my current state. I issue a few final orders, to engrave and erect memorial slabs for those dead we cannot bury, in the hopes of laying a few of the troublesome ghosts to rest, and make it known that there will be another mayorial election upon the arrival of the next wave of migrants. I will not be running.

And now, I return to my training. Someday I will either give my life in defense of this fortress, or, far less likely, I will be its immortal champion. It is hardly the fate I had in mind when I came to Ungegugath, but it will serve. If future generations of Dwarves are still here, in five years, in ten, in fifty, here in this fortress built on the blood, sweat, and vomit of countless generations, every child born, every migrant who arrives to a viable settlement and not a ruin, is a black eye to the Tyrant Queen. If they say of me, "She lived out the rest of her life in Failcannon on the Plains of Ooze, by the Blueness of Malodors", I will take comfort in knowing, among all who have ever seen this place, that is known as the highest of achievements.

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: at this point Failcannon completed 1 real-time year]

TURN 20 - DARVI

If confidence could kill

Meanwhile...

It was early morning when the messenger arrived in my office.

"Sir?"

"Do take a seat. You have news from Ungègugath, I hear?"

"Yes sir."

"First, tell me the bad news."

"The population of the place has gone down to five dwarves, one of them in prison for *checks his notes* violation of production orders. Their animal stocks have also been radically reduced, not counting the ridiculously high number of imprisoned goblins and lurking terrors of the deep."

sigh "I have told the Queen at least a dozen times that we could easily make a fortune if we let those prisoners fight in the arenas of the capital, but she just wouldn't hear of it. What're the good news?"

"The good news are that the survivors are in no immediate threat of dying, neither by hunger, thirst, or murder. They are currently busy clearing up the fortress, even though it takes a while due to a lack of manpower and infrastructure."

"I see. Send in some new *volunteers* then. I'd rather have the place abandoned, but unfortunately it's an integral part of our economy."

What a joke. Of course it's not important, except to our dear Queen to exile anybody who displeases her.

"Yes sir."

"Also appoint Urist as the new manager, Mekboy as the broker 'n bookkeeper, and Monota as the new arsenal dwarf."

"What about Cataclyst?"

"The madwoman? She has killed several dwarves so far and imprisoned others. She's also the mayor. People shouldn't have too much power, and dangerous ones like her doubly so!"

"Understood. But... she's also complaining about her quarters."

"What, too small for her?"

"Yes. She's complaining that she has but one room for resting, eating, and work."

"Aight then. Hand me the maps."

•••

I point at the maps



"There, that should be up to her demands."

"But sir, that's miles below the main part of the fortress!"

"So? I don't see how that would be a problem. You can assign her old room to Urist. Anything else?"

"Well, there's the matter of ghosts..."

"They still haven't gotten rid of them?"

"No sir, one of them has been driving Dariush mad for a while."



"How long does his sentence last anyway?"

"Only a few more days. However, with how busy everyone is, they might forget him in the dungeon anyway."

He started nervously fidgeting with his beard.

"I see.All the more a reason to send in some people that aren't currently preoccupied."

"I will send out for them immediately."

"Good. You may leave now."

"One more thing sir."

"What?"

"On the Queens orders... you are to... leave for Failcannon immediately."

"\\/H\\T?"

"She also says if you're not gone until sunset, you are to be executed on the spot."

"wat"

"Good day, sir."

Much later, upon arrival...

"So when is the drawbridge about to get opened?"

"I don't know sir.", the messenger replies. Apparently he also got banished here, for a frivolous reason no doubt. The queen probably also has a thing against people from down-under.

"I thought there were still survivors here?"

"No doubt sir. Most people were killed, but those that are left are as durable as adamantine."

"Just like us then." The two of us are the last survivors of our migration group. The others have been done in by a combination of zombie trolls, skeletal buzzards and a freak woodcutting accident. "You hear that noise?"

"Yes sir."

"That's the goblins. For now they are stuck behind that wall over there, but they are trying to get here."



"Now doubt for the stuff lying around here."

That was true. The entire area, as far as I can see, was covered in all kinds of junk. Barrels, cages, arms, bolts, legs and arms, several of which still were wearim clothes.

"Well look it on the bright side, sir. We have food lying around, there's booze, and the weather has cleared up too!"

As if by divine irony, gallons and gallons of water poured on my head. While Aussie almost got swept away, I was too busy planting my hand into my face for such nonsense. A few seconds later, it stopped again. "That was the flood gate wasn't it?"

"Yes sir."

Sigh. "Do these buffoons not know which lever to pull or are they being pretentious arseholes to us?" "No idea sir. Maybe-"

Boohoohooohoooo~

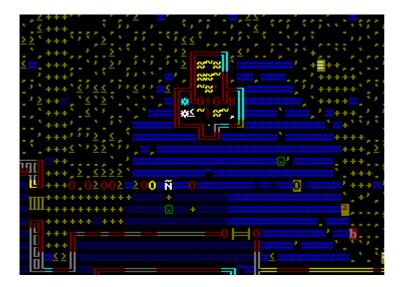
"Please tell me it's not what I think it is."

"It's not what you think it is, sir"

"So it's not a zombie goast that is making fun of us?"

"Not quite sir."

I turned around. In the middle of the floodgate, I saw it. Floating towards me.



[&]quot;Have they still not completed the sacred rites of burial?"

Interlude:

Somewhere outside the fortress walls, unknown to the dwarves, an army of darkness has been raised, to raze the place from the world maps.

Apparently, even enemy goblins find the place to unbearable to live in. Or maybe they were hoping for some easy riches by attacking a weakened fort.

Leading the troops was Azstrog Blazescorpions, a Hammerlord of much renown. She's not the tallest goblin there is, but makes up for it with her muscles and fiendish cunning.

"Listen you wimps!", she shouts in the goblin tongue (in which she is surprisingly eloquent, despite stereotypes) "We're about to make lay siege to the most dangerous place around! They may have told you that there's hardly any of those beards left!" The crowd murmured in agreement, maybe even with joy. "But don't let your guard down! There's horrors of the deep, countless traps, the Undead, a veritable labyrinth of death! And one of beards is said to be a real monster, crueler than any other of its kin! It is said that it was possessed by a daemon, and started to shred apart the others with its bear claws! I mean, bare claws."

She stared at the weaker goblins. Most of them were marksmen, and they didn't look too keen on going hand to hand with a crazy dwarf.

"But!", Azstrog continued, "you have been chosen for this attack because you are the best of the best! Together, we have nothing to fear! Together, We can destroy anything.

When we work together, Failcannon! WILL! FAAAAAAALLLL!!!!"

Due to the psychological effect of teamwork the goblins' mood lifted quite a lot. Some joined in the shouting, while others lifted their crosbows and bows into the air. After all, with so many other people around, the probability of any given goblin to get killed is slim.

After the crowd calmed down, the hammerlord continued: "So, any more questions?" A humble crossbowgoblin in the front row raised his hand. "Yes?"

[&]quot;Seems like not, sir."

[&]quot;Aussie?"

[&]quot;Sir?"

[&]quot;This will be a looong spring I'm afraid."

"Uh... I dunno but..."
"Come on ma, out with it!"
"But isn't the entrance of the fortress on the other side of this wall?"



Somewhat later...

- "Took ver bloody time did va."
- "Sorry, but we were busy cleaning up the place. And then there's the ghosts, and there's only five of us..."
- "And it didn't occur to you even once to lower the drawbridge?"
- "Well that's the thing, we appear to have misplaced the lever..."
- No comment. But Urist really looks like she has no clue. "Who's in charge of the place right now anyway?"
- "Nobody is. We're an autonomous collective."
- "Stop fooling yourself", Dariush interrupts. "This is a dictatorship. A self-perpetuating autocracy in which the working classes-"
- "Quit the random nonsense and tell me who the mayor is."
- "We don't have a mayor", Urist replies.
- "What."
- "I told you. We're an anarcho-syndicalist commune. We take it in turns to act as a sort of executive officer for the week."
- "Uh..."
- "But all the decision of that officer-"
- "Listen, I was told Catalyst was the mayor here-"
- "Well she's a madwoman ain't she. We left her to her delusions and locked her up with a buncha food and booze. She's not doing much aside from punching the crap outta some training dummies." "No wonder you don't get anything done."
- "Well at least we don't going around oppressing people. Dariush here has spent months in prison because she stood up to the violence inherent to the system."
- "Excuse me, but I suddenly remember that I'm very hungry and tired and that I need a drink right now."
- Well. Back to square one I think.
- It started with seven. And I sure hope that it doesn't end with us seven either.
- "Alright, alright, everybody be quiet. Good, now lets get this started", Mekboy declared. "This is the thirteenth biweekly Failcannon committee meeting of..."
 "536"
- "- of the year 536. To start, I want to congratulate each and every one of us for the good work in cleaning the fortress, and especially Urist for finally fixing that sporing bridge, pardon my language." "Was nothing", Urist replied, slightly embarassed.
- "For that, she shall receive the honor of making the first proposal today."
- I gotta say, it's inconventional, but this method is surprisingly effective in fulfilling everybody's demands, provided they are reasonable enough. That way everybody's happy with the minimal effort on everybody else's part.
- No wonder those guys got exiled.
- "Thank you. Now, there's urgent matters at hand. We all know that the goblins have been besieging us for a while..."
- "Well duh", Dariush snarks. "Where's the problem there? They cannot reach us in here!"
- "For now maybe, but eventually they will figure out that they can just walk around it if they go back a few zones, or maybe even build ladders!"
- "Now you're being crazy. Ladders. Next you'll be telling me that dragons aren't real!"
- "The point is that there's only that wall and a handful of stonefall traps between them and us. At the inevitable event that they come storming at us riding on skeletal rhinoceroses we'll be, bluntly, screwed. Which is why I propose that we get our military (not including our dear mayor) back up and running again."

"I'm telling you, the goblins are harmless. Like ugly garden gnomes. Fitting for the local scenery."

"I dunno, the color of human flesh doesn't mesh well with their green tone..."

"This seems like a good moment for me to speak up...". Mormota gets up from his throne.

"Yes, go on."

"Well, I was going to volunteer for digging out some new space for storage, but as the military commander, it is also my duty to oversee military training."

"And what does extra storage space have to do with goblins?"

I see. Dariush's the mandatory obstructive sceptic.

"Nothing actually, I just thought that all the digging would give me lots of muscles and thought that might be worth mentioning..."

"Good for you then. Any other volunteers?"

...Silence. Everybody's looking each other in the eyes. Except for Aussie, who has fallen asleep. I am so going to regret what I'm about to do now.

"I have some experience and evading hostile creatures, as well as with the crossbow."

"Excellent! A few fortifications, and you can kill anything without it getting to you!"

"Unless it can fly. Or is small enough to get through the holes. Or can break the fortifications. Or is already on this side."

"Don't you worry!", Mormota tries to cheer me up. "The two of us, we'll handle everything! Sticks and stones may break your bones but they're still no match for my adamantine pick!"

"That's... reassuring... Speaking of bones, I have noticed a disturbing lack of a hospital. Our small number makes it even more imperative that we heal our wounded a.s.a.p."

"Aight, I'll dig that out too then. Dariush can carry the stuff in there."

"Wha-"

"Any objections?"

A murmur goes through the room. Nobody seems to be opposed to the idea of a hospital. Or to having Dariush work as a pack mule, for that matter.

"Now listen, why me? I have to do all the hard work, and Aussie has barely done anything since arriving here!"

"Good point". Mekboy nods. "She's stated to be an animal trainer, but there's not much around here to train is there?"

"Unless she was the one who taught the skeletal birds the delicate art of vandalism." Urist laughs at her own joke.

"Well, she can do the next thing then. She'll be butchering them and prepare meals out of their remains. Are we in agreement?"

snore

"I'll be taking that as a 'yes' then. What's next... oh, right. Despite our efforts in burrying our dead, we simply lack the receptacles to contain them all. That's why I'm going to make a dozen or two further coffins. We'll see how far we can get with those. Just... make sure you take some bones with you when you go downstairs, okay? Just every now and then, 's all I'm asking. Also, I want to hone my engraving skills for a bit. Give the new immigrants the feeling of being home when they enter their nice and smooth quarters."

"Just don't try to do any actual engravings, okay?" I cannot tell if Mormota was being serious or not. "'scuse me?"

"Heh, yeah. Remember when she tried to engrave a piece of cheese? Everybody thought it was a plump helmet!"

"Wait, so you're telling me that's not a plump helmet?" That's quite the news to me. I thought that the engraving was odd. Plump helmets don't have spots on them.

"Err, anyway, if nobody has anything else productive to say, I'd like to end today's meeting. We've got a lot of work to do... and, er... I'm definitely not going to something horrible to Mormota's room." She leaves the room in a hurry, closely followed by Mormota.

"Hey Mek!"

"Hi Darv. How's it going?"

"Eh, you know. Is the training room ready?"

"Almost. Urist's about to attach the last mechanisms. Mormota's already waiting for you there."

"Aight. I see you're making some progress here. The hospital looks really nice now. And your engraving skills have increased a lot lately."

"Pfah. My engravings have always been of the highest quality. It's *you* culturally insensitive slobs that only begin to appreciate my art!"

"Whatever you say, sure..."

I leave through the western doorway and head towards the training room. The goblins have left over the last few months, so Mormota decided to do something else to test our combat prowess. "Just in time. We can start now if you want to."

"Not quite." I lock the door behind me. "We don't want any skorses rampaging through the fort, do we."

"Good thinking. Now, what we have here are a pair of skeletal horsed and a ground hog. Any moment now Dariush will trigger the lever and they will get out and attack us."

"I think they already committed ten kinds of crimes against my nose." Pooh. Even with no flesh left they still stink like rot.

"That's why we're doing this, right? Kill them so we can safely dispose of them. And the risk is practically negligible!"

"If confidence could kill, you wouldn't even need your pick there. Heheh."

"Damn right. But it just feels right-"

"Wait, the cages are opening! Ready yourself!"

[...]

"Was that all?"

"Told you it would be easy."

"I could barely shoot at them, you killed them that quick." Even without extraordinary strength, Mormota cut through the undead like adamantine through bone. Which he actually literally did. "Just don't try picking your nose with that."

"Why would I want to pick- oh I get it. Nice one."

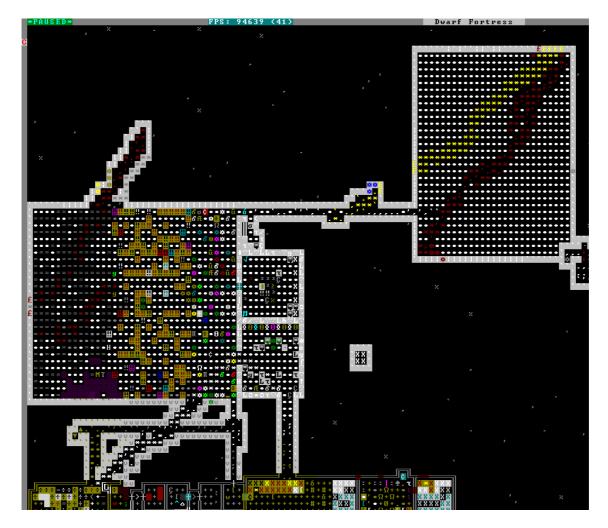
"Now let's open the door so we can tidy up this mess. And put more cages in here."

"Yea, next time should get more challenging. At least half a dozen or so of them critters."

"Speaking of your pick, we got to expand our necropolis. There's no place left and we need the space should we get any new migrants." I hand him a tablet, engraved with the plans for the new crypts.

"Right below the old ones. I'd ask ya if you could do it on your own but I already know the answer."

"Damn right I can do it! You just wait and see, I'll have this dug out before Dariush and Aussie have hauled the other cages down here."



Weeks later

The fort has been plunged into chaos.

Goblins all over the place.

Trolls demolishing the workshops.

The stockpiles burning with searing flames.

The undead escaping from their cages.

The dwarves running around in panic.

Aussie tries to escape through the eastern entrance.

She gets shot in the back by the goblin crossbow-men.

She is dead before her body touches the ground and the Trolls try to eat her.

Urist attempts to block the way out for the undead.

She gets trampled on by a stampede of skorses while carrying a lignite block.

Dariush flees into the deepest parts of the fortress, hoping that the invading forces wouldn't follow her.

She takes a wrong turn.

She writhes in agony as the flesh melts off her bones, covered in deadly dust.

Containment has been breached.

Catalyst has escaped. Mormota and Darvi, previously occupied with holding back the forces of evil,

try to detain her.

The insane dwarf disarms the miner and brings the slaughter to every (un)living being around.

And Mekboy, overlooking the tragedy, weeps for her fallen friends as blood starts falling from the heavens...

TURN 21 - DARIUSH

Can't think of anything to place here

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: Dariush had the next turn, but didn't do updates, or anything closely resembling an update, except a small list I placed below.]

Things of note:

- 1) To the south of our main fortress I set up a lake-drilling project. To finish, please finish the pumps around the the empty water, then add another layer one z-level lower when the water drains, then cover the down stairs with hatches when you get to the seabed. Connect a lever from inside the Lesser Failcannon to any gear assembly that powers the whole contraption to seal the entrance.
- 2) The whole magma forge level is OVERRUN with FBs.
- 3) There's a siege going on.
- 4) Did I mention that there's seven dwarves remaining, out of whom one is a walking vegetable?

TURN 22 - ARCANGELSD

STFO

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: arcangelsd did not make any in-character updates for his turn because "I was thinking of writing my turn with perspective, with some good writing that I like, but seeing the current state of the fortress clusterfuck madhouse thing, I'll be content of just posting my tries of running the fortress."]

"There seems to be one mica gear assembly that is cursed, because no one wants to build it. They just drop the mechanism a few squares away from the gear.. weird"

"For great hilarity, Aussie seems the only one that does his work reliably. I'm afraid."

"Everyone is building mechanisms and pumps. Aussie is plotting something I'M SURE"

"Err... a FB popped out in the stairs, we lost the main stairs leading to the old forges, and everything inbetween, including some stockpiles and rooms.

I salvaged the new forges, by walling the paths. And Darvi nearly got forgotten and killed when he got in the wrong side of the FB/wall iteration."

[regarding Darvi's status] "You are actually SLEEPING 1z-level and +-20 squares from the forgotten beast that got though an unexpected path.

I'll leave your fate... to tomorrow.

You are entombed with the beast, for more FUN exponential.

Also, we lost everything from level 78 downwards. That includes a fifth of our food and drinks, the magma forges, darvi's room, and our food processing area.

The rest is in good shape, thought."

"Darvi... let me explain it to you. It is hard, but you are...the luckiest, meanest SOB in this fortress. You finished your nap, then waltzed to your room, and then walled the stairs, this time in the correct side. I awarded your brave (¿?) action with dis-entombing you. Also, you salvaged your room. So, correction, we lost everything to Darvi's room.

The works in the lake-drilling are currently paralyzed, because I'm more focused in building the power infrastructure (windmills) and gathering wood from where is available. I'll try to reclaim the forges thought, the beast seems content with milling around in our food stockpiles."

"It's an old guest of us, a green glass quadruped or something alike. I first noticed it in the main stairs. It just teleported there, I spent an entire hour searching for a possible entrance, but I found nothing. I walled up the stairs, and called it a draw."

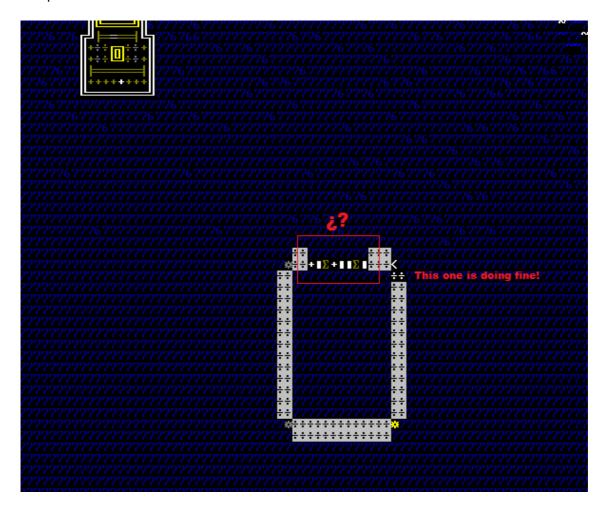
"I was thinking of building an Slime reactor, given that the slime ocean is flooding everything below it's z-level.

Actually, dariush, the source of the water that flooded the old magma forges is the ocean of slime xD"

"Mhhh... that gear assembly, as far as I can tell, power the failpump and the beach washer. I'm not taking it out.

Also, the pumps that you were building over the sea, the topmost ones... are deconstructing themselves?

I suspect treason!!"



"Migrants! Two brave souls, that, disregarding the danger, the odour, and the bizarrearchitecture, just approached the fortress. A crafter, who insisted in being called "arcangelsd", to the suspicions of his ranger companion, who assured that he responded to the name of Fikod just before crossing the bridge to the fortress.

The ranger itself hasn't told its name yet..."

"Also, Aussie is one step closer into becoming the mayor of this. Catalyist is currently being pincushioned by a bunch of suspiciously good positioned kobold archers. That are using STEEL arrows. Good move Aussie. Good move."

FAILCANNON PRESS

We got some news: Catalyst survived its assasination attempts, an is currently resting on her bedroom.

On other news, the silent ranger just told us his name: Gizogin, and claims to be a battlemage. Whatever.

Another two Foul Beast of the Horryfing Within have appeared in the main stairs: A snail and a crab. They are currently dancing in a room near the ocean of Slime.

Fun facts of today: it seems that the pumps only wil hold together if we put it against any other constructed machinery, as our Merciless Avenger, Dariush IV, was theorizing.

"Eric, it's all cool. I walled off every path. EVERY path, and now they are harmless. I guess they are coming through an opening somewhere over the hatches we use to contain the flood of the old magma forges. The ones, that are casually rendered useless because someone digged a paralell stairway. Whatever. The point is that, even in a far, and optimistic future, it will be impossible. It looks like this:



The Slimecean is directly dropping onto the fortress, from more than 10 z-levels above. I'm unable to stop it, and for when we have the mediums, it wil be impossible to pump/erradicate al the water and forgotten beasts. The point is: This flood is killing my FPS, I'm at 20. I looked at the insane pumping infrastructure, and nothing connects with the source of this flood. It's simply a diagonal hole at the bottom of the slime ocean. I think that one similar is causing all the beasts to appear in the stairs, but

i'm unable to close it. In fact, it seems that we have more than the half of the beasts that are alive partying hard in the lost sections of the fortress.

Second point: As I said, the game is going SLOW. I haven't even reached my first spring yet, and this week is my first week of actually doing something at the university. I'll update anyways, even if I am only able to run DF a hour a day until the weekend. I expect to hit my second summer before friday. Is everyone okay with this?"

"Okay, I have pinpointed the source of the flood to one fortification (¿?) and one stair (¿?¿?) to the

Given that the main yard has been claimed by zombie buzzards given the impossibility of deploying marksdwarves, I'll start working on the innards of the fortress. Looking at the maps of the old forges, I have located several rooms that should be untouched by the flood. Those rooms include several common bedrooms, from which I'll salvage some beds and statues, and the prize: a unflooded weapon stockpile ripe with bins of weapons AND pump components.

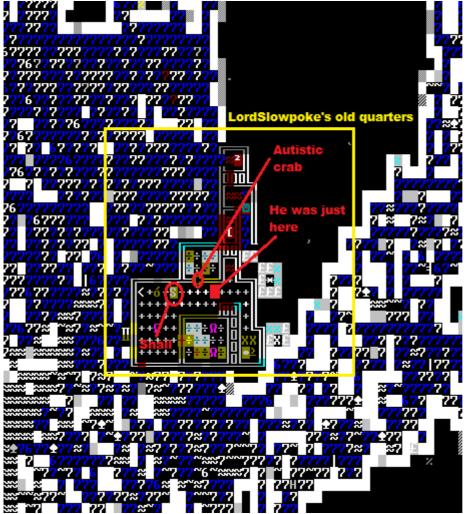
About the buzzards, never mind: Mormota II got pissed and ripped 'em apart."

"If it's hard to read, purple figure is where Catalyst enjoys having some strolls, the green square is the zone(3 z-levels below) where the kobolds appeared, and the red square is the evidence of the plot: steel arrows!

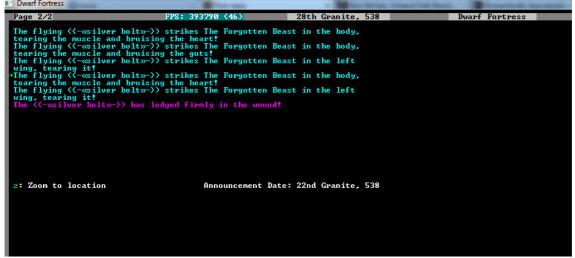
Also, seems that Catalyst will be the mayor of Failcannon until its death, because it doesn't have any friends because it's an enemy of the civilization whose mayor it's himself, who doesn't have any friends, so he couldn't be the mayor of the civilization he's at war with because he does't have friends to support him because he is an enemy to their civilization...So, in consequence, he can't be deposed as a mayor, neither put into a military squad of the civilization he isn't part of. It all makes sense now.

Also i think he's the one who spooks the workers that are working in the windmills and in the physical representation of my ego that i'm building over the lakedrilling project."

"Well, Darvi, Gizogin is disputing you the title of luckiest SOB of the fortress. Why? Because he somehow found a path to the quarantined part (¿?) of the fortress, ultimately getting to Lordslowpoke's old quarters. Where, if I didn't say before, there were 2 FBs happily enjoying the commodities of such quarters.



But, this guy, instead of dying like a good Failcannon dwarf, just peppered the one which reacted with bolts until he ran out of them.



Then, he went for more. Just because. It seems, that for this guy there is no overkill, just "Open fire" and "I need to reload" (Sorry Serg. Schlock author)

In other order of things, I reclaimed the forges. YAY And my first spring came, without finishing anything of my schedule. F**K"

"oh cool.

I just made a dwarven water reactor that works without water. It's magic.

Did you guys knew that if you submerge a water wheel in a wave it goes on and generates full power? I did not."

"Project: Screw The Foul Ocean (S.T.F.O.), whose schematics were created by our dear citizen Dariush, it's nearing operational state!

Also: how do I open the outer orthoclase bridges?

I am unable to find the correct lever so I'll do the most sensible thing: pull levers at random until the gates open or there is no more dwarfs remaining (save the ones outside)

YAY GOT THE RIGHT LEVER

We do have two new nameless faces: a high master mason, and a talented medic

Oh, and two kobold ambush squads too. Anyone calling dibs on the 'bolds?

Well, we are losing. To Kobolds with steel weapons... again. Aussie is nowhere to be seen, darvi ran away, Mormota is busy elsewhere and Gizogin's luck is no more. Mekboy, you have an axe. You are our last hope! Nope, you're dead. Darvi, you got cornered at the windmills and just received a serious injury.

Gizogin, I take out my statement. You fought off two 'bolds, and you are pincushioning another one. YOU ARE THE BOSS

And Darvi, a correction: you weren't running away, you were ambushing.. you are turning that swordsbold into paste!

Dariush! I choose you! Help us that they are withdrawing now! Wow. You are wrestling that guy to death, aren't you?

Mormota! Glad to see you! Strike them with you pic.. kung fu skills? Where is your pick? Nice fisticuffs anyway.

Dariush? Did you just bit that kobold's head off?

Darvi? Wow, Darvi, wow

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Page 10/10 FPS: 61758 (49) 24th Malachite, 538

The Lucky SOB bashes The Kobold Swordsman in the upper body with his -copper crossbow-, bruising the muscle, jamming the right true rib through the left lung and tearing apart the left lung! The Kobold Swordsman is having more trouble breathing! The -copper crossbow- has lodged firmly in the wound!

The Lucky SOB twists the embedded -copper crossbow- around in The Kobold Swordsman's upper body!
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The danger has passed. Dariush is strangling one of the stragglers, and Darvi is finishing the other. Old Failcannon sure knows how to hold it's own in a gentleman's fight."

"A lot of things. I'm afraid of activating the STFO bacuse we have at least a FB waiting for it in the ocean, for getting an example.

A fun fact about FB: the pathing seems to be so horribly broken, that the beasts are rendered harmless by their indecision when it comes to certain point in the fortress. To show: a path was left undiscovered and unchecked for about a year. At least 3 FB had access to it. One is patrolling the food stockpiles near the forges, and two more are LOCKED FOREVER in Lordslowpoke's quarters (yes, the ones that gizogin disturbed) And by locked I mean that one of them hasn't moved an inch in an entire year.

And the pop... We were 9, 2 more came, but as mekboy kicked the bucket, we're exactly ten poor souls."

"I'm more afraid of Dariush. He seems to have INSANE wrestling skills (Or at least some insane stats). And he bites. HARD.

And Darvi too. He has developed some kind of Crossbow-fu, as seen when he fatalitie'd a kobold with that copper crossbow (Yes, the excerpt of combat report that I uploaded was a finisher move, that makes the crossbow-lodging al more badass).

And our resident BOSS, Gizogin. Seriously, that guy got some mad luck, there at Failcannon. The only ones that seem harmless now are Aussie, because he always disappear when a fight breaks up, the poor unnamed inmigrant medic, Erica, and myself.

Mormota and Catalyst FUN potential is left uncontested, of course."

"Deathsword capacity to move is destroyed.

Dariush's arm is broken, he was looking for the missing spearbold but it found him first. Darvi got some damage to both of his legs.

And I think it's all for now. Everyone but Dariush and Deathsword are stabilized and productive now, so.. it's all fine here in Failcannon. Could it get enven worse? I don't believe so."

"Given that I'm planning to throw Deathsword trough a sinkhole in the ocean, I guess that "Keeping dorfs alive" wasn't the project."

FAILCANNON PRESS TODAY

BREAKING NEWS: a caravan of humans came today! We're all excited and ready to trade and...

BREAKING NEWS! The kobolds laid siege to us! Three archer squads were seen approaching the fortress from the north!

In other related news, our human friends are no longer able to trade with us.

In other unrelated news, THE STFO IS COMPLETE!

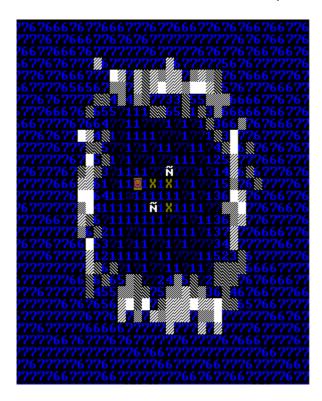
There have been complains of it being "unsafe" but our friend !!Scientist!! Deathsword II has proposed himself as a voluntary to test the safety of the project! ALL HAIL DEATHSWORD!

Today is a happy day for our beloved fortress! A adventurer just came to our fortress and accepted to live here! And his desicion wasn't at all motivated by Dariush, Darvi, Gizogin and Mormota "welcoming" him!

That's all what she had to say! Stay tuned to Failcannon today! And remember, that with our brand new adamantine emisor/receptor we can't telepathically speak to you at all! It's only that this tower has.. a good acoustic!

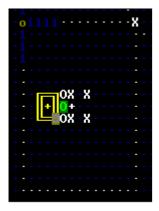
Oh the fate! Dariush fell to the sea! Now he's an novice swimmer. A pissed novice swimmer. He says he spent several weeks alone in the sea because no one bothered to look down. Thank the gods he survived!

Still, It's scheduled that Deathsword will be performing his stunt soon!

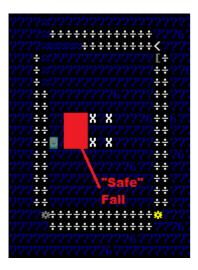


FAILCANNON PRESS TODAY TIMES

Today is the day! Our local hero Deathsword is going to do the run test for the STFO, to show the masses tha it is completely safe!



And there she goes! FOR SCIENCE!!



A little off the "safe" landing zone...

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"Deathsword II' Laborferal"
"D
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FUCK

Yup. The STFO is completly safe, as demonstrated! So, Fellow dwarves of Failcannon, enjoy its magnificence! And always remember Deathsword!

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'Deathsword II' èrithekzong, Cripple !!Scientist!! has drowned.

'Urist The Third' Datankesh, Siege Engineer has drowned.

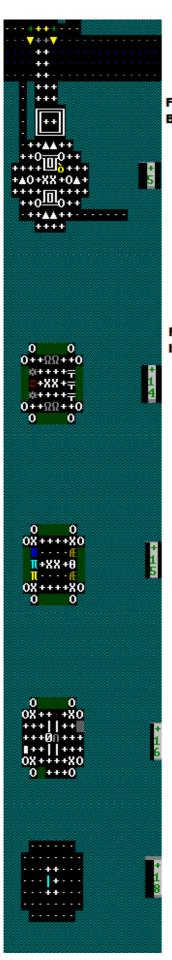
The dwarves were unable to complete the gabbro Slab.
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FAILCANNON NEWS

Dear.. uhh.. surviving residents of Failcannon! I speak to you, not via telepathic emission at all, because, as you know, my new broadcasting tower has a very good acoustic! Yes, acoustic it is! The adamantine emitter does nothing at all! it does not keep you happy despite all the horrible news and deaths that we have suffered recently!

```
'Mormota II' Äsrithlut has been ecstatic lately.
'rrdgway' Kêshshakgusil has been ecstatic lately.
'Erica IV' Koganrìthar has been ecstatic lately.
'Darvi II' Dorenothsin has been ecstatic lately.
'Gizogin' Ogkadol has been ecstatic lately.
'Catalyst' Tiristlektad has been ecstatic lately.
'Dariush IV' èzumbakust has been ecstatic lately.
'ThatAussieDwarf' Mozibobok has been happy lately.
```

And now dear citiz survivors, i'm gonna tell you about the magnificence of my new tower, even though you know because you were the ones that built it, not at all coerced fot my fantastic adamantine mind-warping machine, that is surely not installed at the top of this very tower!



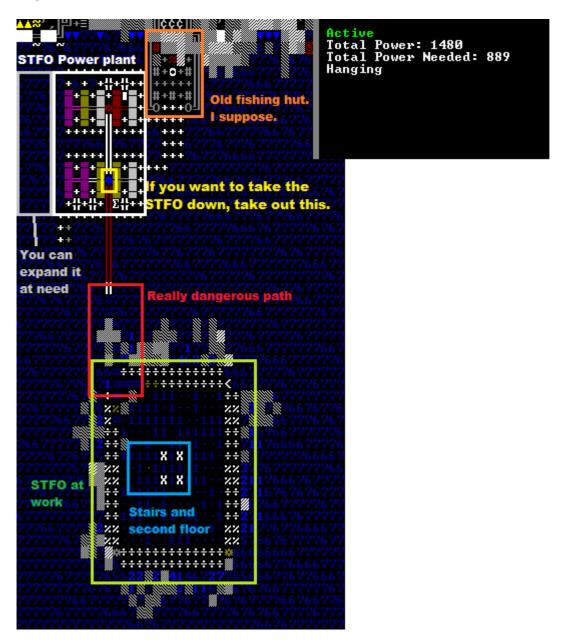
FailCannon News tower, Base level.

FailCannon News tower, broadcasting level.

FailCannon News tower, living quarters level.

FailCannon News tower, memorial (unfinished)

FailCannon News tower, adamantine telepathic wave emmiter. Also, jumping out to another topic, given the perilous nature of our awesome ocean driller AKA STFO, I have decided to share the layout of the place with you, adjunting useful notes, in order to avoid tragic accidents like those that ocurred to Deathsword and Urist!



Also, I have a very, maybe the most important new ever given in this broadcast short history: I, Arcangelsd, the dwarf that has kept you united and working, as the very best of the craftdwarves, like in the good old days of our mountainhomes, that has ordered built two of the most awe-inspiring landmarks in this town, resigns as the overseer of this place, to continue my work as the news broadcaster of this still-surviving, prospering community. Not at all to lie low because half of my speech consist of suspiciously specific denials, neither to mind control you to build sanity-destroying constructs, and definitely not at all because I don't trust none of you morens.

So, the next poor soul brave dwarf that volunteers as an overseer should take my advice, either in this broadcast as the ones told in my previous ones, seriously.

To sum up: have no fear of the fiends of the subterranean world, as their minds get confused and

paralyzed in the warped sublevels of this maze fortress!

Still, don't remove the walls marked with a note spelling "Quarantine walls", just in case.

Also, don't get disturbed about the unnaturally high number of foreigner dwarves that are lingering around our living rooms. They are liaisons, and totally harmless (as in they haven't gone insane yet), even the one that spends all his time lying on a table near Dariush'(s?) room.

Our dear mayor, Catalyst, is by now fine, trapped in her room, and more than happy to spook any fool that get too near to her room's windows.

About our trade agreements, don't even try to open the doors to let the traders in. It seems that somebody (maybe the elves, or that scoundrel Aussie) are in league with the goblins, that kill the dwarven caravans, and the suspiciously steel-clad kobolds that ambush and kill the human caravans. Elves are fine, though, but if I were you, I'd keep an eye on them. Maybe they aren't who they say to be! Elves that don't bring wood? Who in heavens are they trying to fool? They are spies! Whatever. I'd say the best course of action with the elves would be to kill them all. If you don't mind the outrageous amount of garbage they leave, it is.

And with that, I say goodbye to my overseeing position, leaving it free to anyone brave enough to manage this fortress. Hee hee hee. Have luck with that.

'arcangelsd II' is ecstatic right now.

TURN 23 – ERIC BLANK

The mayor is dead. All hail the mayor.

Personal Journal of Erica.

Lately I've been harassed by this idiotic "Twobeard," who thinks sexually harassing a woman and the ghost possessing her will have no consequences. I've even been forced to leave the body during the night to prevent him from doing anything particularly stupid. He hasn't given up, not relenting to the smallest degree, and even after so many years as a spirit I haven't figured out how to deal with people like him. Knowing that I'm protecting her has made this body more cooperative, however. Fortunately everything else is going well. I've had enough peace to experience the wonderful dining room that I didn't know we had previously, as well as enough time disembodied to admire the wonderful room I've claimed. The idiot says she likes the nice traps to be found all over the place, and the nice, comfy bed, which I can't enjoy due to being on watch while she sleeps. Only problem is the rain weakens my control over her, because it thins my energy out. This would normally be a good thing as it permits a free spirit to perform more complicated procedures, but not for possessions, where your energy must remain very concentrated.

I still refuse to make any attempt to comprehend this place.

Granite 1st 539.

Today I decided to begin making attempts to control the fortress. It's been slow, as this idiot I've possessed has no desire to simply speak to the others. Forcing her to take the job of overseer took months of pushing her before the position was even open.

She's got the position though, since nobody else was willing to, aside from That lunatic Aussie-Dwarf. I can use her to give direct orders to the others now. I've given up possessing her at all times, but rather only when I need to.

Granite 5th 539.

Going well, I convinced the other dwarves that since there's nothing specific needs done for now,

they should clean up the mess. I've also begun a project to restrict all access to areas of the fortress we have no use for; strip mines, old rooms, catacombs with no space and which hold no tomb that any of the other spirits around me claim is incomplete. I'm also forbidding the items therein, I want them to be forgotten for the moment while I figure out a decent garbage disposal system. Atom smashers worked well before...

I needed to rest and store up energy so I left the fool to herself and the ghost of Twobeard. They're apparently getting along well now...

The sands of time surge forward without fail, and I find the world is still as bitter and merciless as ever. The other spirits I see, those not eternally slumbering, have plans of their own. One dwarf who died of horrible infections caused by the terrible beasts below warned me that he felt the dwarves should at least wear shoes all the time, and preferably military equipment. I whole-heartedly agree, and thus I used the girl to convince the others to dress in military uniform, regardless of the fact they won't be partaking in normal military procedures.

Granite 18th 539.

I was horrified to find that the fools hadn't begun using their uniforms, and so I ordered a mandatory defensive drill and had everyone report to the control room.

And on the 19th of Granite arcangelsd said to meee: "I'm f#\$@&^% drowning you famthut agak! Save me!"



Alas I had no ability to neither swim nor ethereal power enough to lift him off the seabed so my possessing him did nothing but permit him to die without feeling the pain himself. Ungrateful elf was right pissed at me, either way. Not my fault, he chose to go out there for a gauntlet which there were plenty of duplicates of.

By the 25th Granite, they had all gotten their gear together and were stationed, all 8 of them, in the control room. I possessed Erica to relay to them the news of arcangelsd's death below the waves, claiming that she saw him trip and fall in. I mean what the hell else could have happened? A sudden zombie-tigershark attack? Not a zombie for... a few yards at least. Nothing he had LOS with from the STFO...

I think they were mildly suspicious of her because of this, but mostly they just accepted it...

I ended the drill and told everyone to remain in uniform. The next morning when I came to check on my minion, she was naked again (damn close to it, anyway.), and upon further inspection, so is everyone else. I am thoroughly disappointed, but the other spirits found it rather amusing how we all end up dead together because of our ignorance of one another's mistakes, and told me not to dwell on it. Without a true afterlife it seems, life goes on and on forever as disembodied spirits, and still nobody sane enough to care does care. Or maybe we're all insane, who could diagnose the diagnoser of our insanity as sane themselves?

Granite 26th 539

While convening with the other spirits in the lowest, flooded quarter of Failcannon, we all witnessed one of the many horrid monsters dwelling there, Vesh Amasmondul Ibruknunur Rash, an enormous serpent, wander over to a door and smash it down without provocation, and then wander away nonchalantly. I swear those things are even more messed up in the head than any number of us.

Nobody had any ideas, and few had any interest, so the business of keeping the living alive and smarter than they currently are is left to me alone.

Soapalope later suggested I deconstruct vast portions of the fortress and remodel them, internally at least, so that it may be navigated more easily. I'm not sure if I'm up to such a daunting task with just 8 dwarves at my disposal...

A spirit I met manifesting herself high over the ground, DuckThatQuacks, informed me of her intention to find the single most valuable item in the fortress - by usefulness or historical significance - and hide it "so that all may perish in fire and rot, and even the gods forget that Failcannon ever existed." I say she's absolutely bonkers, but she hasn't moved an inch, so i question whether she just wanted to get rid of me, or if she knows some obscure method to viewing the world around her. I haven't yet given the living the order to enchant a memorial stone to capture her soul yet, either way.

Entry -33-

I'm beginning to wonder how so many dwarves keep coming back from the dead - That salesman told me i bought the last Junior Dwarf Disguise kit he had (with real horsehair beard extensions and non-lead hair dye for fooling your friends and Forgotten Beasts). I wonder if they got the deluxe kit with the false eyebrows and pillow to stick under your tunic. They look nothing like they used to, i swear...

Personal Journal of Erica.

I haven't written in a long time, I feel less and less desire to. I suppose I should disclose the events of the last months.

On the 28th of Granite, Vesh lost her temper yet again and destroyed another door in the flooded sections. With her entire body rotting away in her kins' excretions she must be in excruciating pain, but alas only the spirits of her fellow forgotten beasts could possess her to ease this pain, and only the living could end it. I haven't seen a single spirit of a forgotten beast, however. Perhaps they have no true souls, like the lesser beasts? Goblins too angry to leave (and who have broken the spell of Queen Led and thus were not drawn away to be reincarnated.) and elves bent on yelling at us about our resource usage are plenty, though.

On the 18th of Slate, a migrant arrived. He was under no possessions, and the dead demand their chances with the living, but Catalyst refused, saying this one was useful in his own right. Twobeard was the first to greet him, the lunatic. Being a ghost, the dwarf was absolutely terrified of him and Catalyst barely managed to close the gate behind him. We've learned his trades and he has been dubbed 'Scaraban' for whatever reason. He was an adventurer, unaltered by Led's wicked ways, and hearing of Failcannon's demise he came looking for both a challenge and a grand reward. He's one of us now, though.

On the 24th of Slate, a zombie buzzard of Led's design swooped down and started wrecking things, only really damaging a shale statue it knocked over. It was quickly put down by the living.

Unfortunately, it was a distraction. There was another zombie buzzard, more directly controlled by Led, which was tinkering with a floodgate directly beneath Garbage Dump A, where water flowed into a tunnel sealed by three such gates from an entirely open fortress. When DuckThatQuacks spotted it, he raised the alarm like I never thought a spirit could; all the living dwarves heard him bellowing from deep under ground and rushed to the surface to deal with the beast. That Aussie-Dwarf guy was the first to arrive, and easily dealt with it.



A crisis so ingenious and destructive, averted at the last instant. Knowing what zombies were capable of, and what Led desires, I was absolutely terrified to think we'd come so close to our own watery graves. Well, most of our graves would just be getting more damp than they were, but the living were pretty concerned.

On the 27th of Slate, the insane spirit of 'Cheese' Adilishen took a cave spider silk hood off a goblin corpse and hid it, yapping about how none of us would ever find it and how smart he felt. Idiot.

On the 3rd Felsite, Catalyst finally got a chance to have a mandate finished; Mormota made a sterling silver door for her.

Then on the 8th Felsite, 'DuckThatQuacks' finally found what he thinks is the metaphorical keystone of our world; an undecorated, foreign giant cave spider silk cloak one of the other spirits had been wearing when they died. His maniacal laughter was fully audible to even the forgotten beasts in the depths of the magma sea, but only served to reinforce the expressions of all the other spirits, seeming to say "are you bloody serious?:\"

Today is the 18th Felsite. Duck-That-Quacks-Maniacally and Cheese have gone back to moping about their boredom after realizing how helpful they had actually been by dealing with some of the trash through simply making it vanish. The living are left wandering around cleaning up the trash while the dead look for entertainment and watch for threats.

I witnessed arcangelsd making his way up to the top of his tower. He still refuses to speak to me. Mekboy also departed us, two other spirits I've never met before coming along with him. Said they were to look for fresh meat to send our way and any migrants Queen Led may have sent as saboteurs and break their possessions, bringing them safely to Failcannon, to labor until death, in the name of the dead who possess them. This Fortress is no refuge after all; nobody came here to live. Queen Led made sure of that, and still those who come, regardless of intention, die here in unspeakable ways when they have toiled long enough to earn our trust. They become the denizens of the Palace of the Dead, the Necropolis, which they had built.

I see now why Failcannon is the great crossroads of the universe, of every universe, as Lur Thiefwitch tells us. It is such because it is destined to be the last great battleground against the goddess of death and Queen Led. But none of those fighting will be alive, oh no. When no living soul stands in Failcannon to stave off the stagnation of ruinhood, when their labor that defends it ceases, Led and her armies of forsaken and unlucky souls will descend upon us, the last free souls in the multiverse, to decide whether the afterlife will ever again be open to the souls of the dead, and whether any soul will ever again know peace, in any world, of any god. The 400 souls here will defend, but only time will tell. Only time and willpower fight in the Wars of the Dead. We can measure our strength of will, but when is always the question.

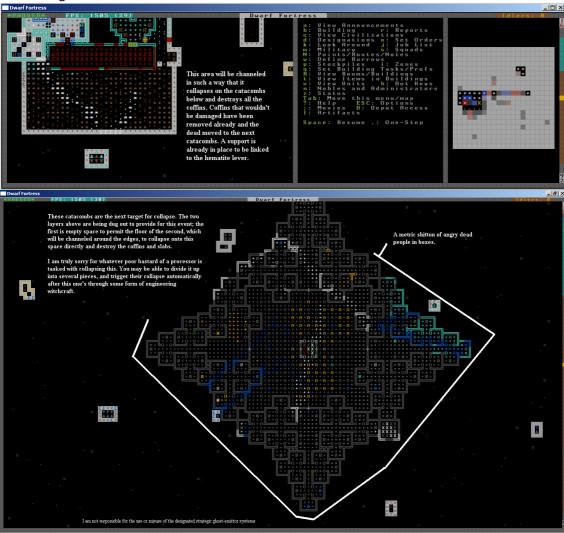
Once again I haven't bothered to write over a long period. I was actually rather busy directing work. Today is the 8th Limestone, Early Autumn, 539.

During the last half of Felsite, Catlalyst managed to escape her cell, unlocking the door somehow. The living were frightened when they finally spotted her; Gizogin and Darvi taking shots at her with their crossbows. I actually had them all stationed downstairs to give Catalyst the chance to escape back to her cell, but none of them did exactly as they were told. There was much running amok and catalyst hiding in various rooms on her way out in order to avoid conflict, being shot when she failed, but she eventually met Scaraban on the courtyard catwalks, who had been trying to steal one of her admittedly delicious longland seed roasts for his lunch. She wasn't happy and they almost got in a fistfight, but she eventually left for her cell, where she was locked inside and has remained since. The living built a wall to contain her from fear. She did leave all of her military gear (and most of her clothing...) outside, where it remains. She's been whining about wanting her pants back since then but nobody has had time to arrange for this. She's also intent on conducting a meeting with one of the various liaisons waiting outside her doorway now.

The time since then has been uneventful for the living; everyones been carrying out their hauling duties and that Aussie-dwarf has even practiced a little farming and brewing. For the dead though, a grand scheme was concocted; Since we know that the coffins and slabs are divine symbols that keep most of the dead from even gathering energy to begin manifesting, we must destroy them when the time comes that there are no living in the fortress. Unfortunately this must also be performed by the living, so it's a bit of a last-dwarf-out-slams-the-door thing.

The plan is to have all the dead, sane or not, entombed in the catacombs near the surface, and the much larger catacombs underground. I'm engineering a system that will cave in all of these on cue (from the control room), thus destroying all the coffins, bodies, and slabs, in turn releasing the slumbering dead to fight our last battle. There will of course be many too far gone or enraged to assist, but since they have coalesced no energy I feel that those of us currently free can deal with them rather easily and save the others. I intend to have it all linked to that artifact hematite lever that's coincidentally linked to everything else that could possibly go wrong in this place. Should make for an eventful last day on Aluonra for the living, and probably set up a more energetic battlefield for us spirits.

I drew diagrams of this:



I call it the Strategic Ghost Emitter System. As stated, we will need at least one living, sane, and functional dwarf to pull the lever, and probably the next couple years to set it up.

Work has begun by digging out the necessary components and removing and reinterring the dead around the fortress to ensure that all of us are at these locations, ignoring a very few outcasts. Migrants came recently and were put to work; a metalcrafter named Kirby and a woodcutter who bears the nickname Deathsword. I am aware of two other Deathswords, already dead, so for all purposes I've designated this one with three bars. Deathsword III has since been ordered to take up mining since Mormota was on break for the whole season and that Aussie-dwarf guy and Zasit, the woman I possessed, are rather slow miners.

Fall has been uneventful. The human caravan that arrived hasn't been permitted inside (despite no ambushes slaughtering them...) so there was no chance to seize there goods. I expect the dwarven caravaneers, amazingly still operating in this even more dangerous world, might get a chance at it, though. And bring another liaison to waste our time... I should force them to work for us...

The dead mason Etur has been spending vast tracts of time with Catalyst, for whatever reason. They seem to like each other. Makes me wonder if the gods would permit ghosts to marry... Or will there

be any gods when this is over? Lur made it seem as though there would be a shortage of deities, and spirits like us may be able to take their place. I should hope I survive the battle ahead...

In the meantime I and the spirit of Ledi have been playing with some living groundhogs we found mysteriously not drowning in a fully submerged tunnel, open to the ocean though they are actually a couple stories underground. I suspect Led or her goddess of death of causing this, but I can't actually find any clues to show what's going on. We can't possess soulless or overly powerful beings, either way. They don't even seem to mind that they're inhaling only water. None of the other spirits had any comment on this. Arcangelsd hasn't come down from his tower and shoos away anyone that wants to talk to him. Makes one wonder what the hell he could be doing.

Does... anyone else hear carnival music? No? I must be going insane... Wait a minute, that's the sound of Darvi drowning as he tries to shut off the STFO... Welcome to the Palace of the Dead, Darvi. Please don't go insane. I'm gonna have to try something else...

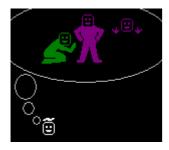
Lately I've been managing the trade with Stakud, the owner of the dwarven caravans. Bastard is shrewd, and none of us are even moderately skilled as traders.

The first big hurdle was getting everyone to stop work and go trade. Since the living still tend to ignore us, I had to possess Zasit and charge up to the top of the ramparts and look at the caravan I already knew was camped out there. After sprinting like an elite elven coward up, I had to do it all again in reverse, being even more difficult to avoid slipping and smashing myZasit's ugly mug face on the ground, find everyone, and tell them the caravan was here and to stop everything to run topside and pile heaps of trash onto the depot. By that point I lost concentration and couldn't directly possess Zasit, who went back to digging with the rest of the construction team. It took a week for someone to realize the gates needed opened. Zasit was so concentrated on digging I couldn't pull her away, and nobody was ever in earshot for me to give the order verbally. Once that was done, and the traders had marched into the depot and unloaded their crap, I noticed our broker was nowhere to be seen. It wasn't hard to find him; he'd taken the opportunity to reassure us that he really was a legendary sleeper. After that, he decided to clean his room, as well as shuffle the items in his cabinets, spending about a full day. I confronted him shortly afterward about it;

"Gizogin! What's taking so long? The traders have been up there twiddling their thumbs for a week, waiting on you. You're the only dwarf here who knows anything about dealing with traders, and we can't afford to let this go poorly!"

"Lay off you old hag; I'm legally assured a certain amount of food, booze, and time each year for recreation. There's nothing saying I can't take it now, nor that I'm legally obligated to do anything during recreational periods. I didn't eat dinner last night anyway and was feeling a little dry. I'll get around to it."

Bastard decided to spend all 200 hours of it in one sitting. When I asked again he pulled the "non-specific recreational periods" clause on me as well. Needless to say, I fired him. I plan to have Zasit depict the event in a statue of her striking a menacing pose as he weeps, with the newly appointed broker, Kirby, in the back jumping with joy.



Of course we had to take a week off with Kirby to try to show her some good ways to deal with the traders, before she was actually ready to go out there and do business. Once begun, it went... Acceptably. Nobody was particularly pleased with the trading, though, and I stepped in for Kirby's conscience when she started slipping;

"You want HOW MUCH for three asses?"

Very confused Stakud; "Uhh... Face value, with 75% extra profit. I can't just give them away, you know. Bathing in magma with a pissed off cave bear is probably safer than running a wagon train through these cursed lands. It costs enough to pay the guards and hire new merchants to replace the ones who quit the instant they're on safe ground, and I of course expect to retire, alive, some day."

"And WE live here. We absolutely must have living livestock, food and drink, and weapons. I know all we have to offer is old clothes from the deceased, but come on! It's not that hard to sell them, is it?"

"More than you would know. The next biggest thing your paying for is overtime for the liaisons that I hired to take the paperwork every year. Where are they? Dead?"

"Well, no... The mayor hasn't had time to deal with them yet."

"Ah. Legally guaranteed annual recreational periods?"

"Uhh... Sure. Something like that. I would suggest you simply not hire them. We're rather fed up with offering your employees permanent unofficial retirement."

"If you knew anything about the Led, you'd know that she wanted as many dwarves stuffed into this shack as possible, and that any laws involved with that, like the ones governing my actions, expire after 20 years, and must be renewed as a whole. The last thing she mandated before the city was destroyed by demons was to tack on renewal of all other contracts to that package, and forbid export of wood for an 11 year period, strangely. The surviving lawmakers throughout the nation are still operating on her word, though. Whole world really has gone to hell in the greater picture... Wars everywhere, the demons that escaped ravaging dwarven fortresses throughout the home range and down in the human and elf villages. A good chunk of the populace of this half of the continent is spread out through the wilderness at this point.

Anyway, you were looking to buy these -fine- asses? I'll cut you a deal; I'll take face value with 10% profit, and my pick of the trash in this pile over here." *gestures to a pile of trash*

"Finally! I'll take it." *chisels approval onto slab*

"Thanks. Pleasure doing business with you." *snicker*

As it turns out, that pile of trash was the entirety of what we had prepared to offer as trade. Cunning bastard lead me right into a trap with the small talk... You should have seen the bill on the steel gear!

Dear Armok it would make a god soil their loincloth to make such profit! Of course I had left Kirby to deal with it herself in my anger...

Trade concluded, we had lost around 10k in trash to the tyrant. There was no sense of ethereal possession about him, but I still suspect him of being a spy for Led. I'm currently searching for a law that would give me some authority over the liaisons. Led or dead, a dwarf has his rights, and we can't just order them around without good reason.

Progress on the S-GES has been slow the last month or two due to everyone being involved with trading and taking their recreational time to enjoy the relatively fresh food and expensive booze. Zasit actually remembered what I wanted done for the upper catacombs. It's been completed; Scaraban even finished hooking it up this morning. The Dead Dwarf Storage section is only around 3/7 of the way dug out, however.

Speaking of the dead, Etur the ghostly mason hasn't left catalyst for even an instant this season. Makes one wonder whom she's actually been 'conducting meetings' with, don't it? Can't blame her though, knowing that ¾ of the living are female. Now if only we could find her shoes and toss them up on the roof... The other spirits have been lazing around or simply asking me about progress lately, no real input. even Cheeze and DuckThatQuacks(Maniacally) have been floating around bored.

8th Opal, Late Winter 539.

Things have gone swimmingly lately, no violence, no tragedy, not even any major delays in construction. Hard to believe we're actually in Failcann- Oh Armok, who's screaming?

The flying +Bronze Bolt+ strikes the Traitorous Mayor in the lower body, tearing the muscle and bruising the guts through the cave spider silk trousers!

The flying +Bronze Bolt+ strikes the Traitorous Mayor in the left upper leg, tearing the muscle through the cave spider silk trousers!

The flying +Bronze Bolt+ strikes the Traitorous Mayor in the right upper leg, tearing the muscle and chipping the bone through the cave spider silk trousers!

So on and so forth with the groin shots for about 3 pages, a couple hits to the upper body...

The Traitorous Mayor screams like a little girl and returns to sleep!

Dear Armok; Dariush just waltzed in and started shooting at Catalyst while she slept! Oh the dwarfanity! I'll have to get someone to help her!

I found Mebtob and telepathically convinced her to go get Catalyst and bring her to the hospital, but halfway to Zasit to prep for surgery I was waylaid by more screams, this time from Mebtob. When I made it back I found her running in circles in the stockpiles carrying Catalyst, screaming at the top of her lungs while staring right at Catalyst. She then promptly dropped Catalyst on the floor, and cleaved her head off with her axe. Perhaps an insane woodcutter isn't a great option for medical staff...

Suddenly, Catalyst's angry ghost appeared from her own decapitated head and glared straight into the eyes of a now deathly-pale Mebtob. They screamed in unison, one in rage and the other from shear unadulterated terror, and Catalyst's ghost flung herself deep inside the mind of the now thoroughly soiled woman, who quickly began gripping her head and stumbling around shrieking for a

good minute before finally collapsing in a heap on the floor. She stood, and turned to look upon spirit of Erica with eyes of mischievous evil, and gestured for her to follow... And the liaison making a puddle in the corner finally starts running around like a maddwarf.

My conversation with Catalyst was... interesting... I only wish I could have had the strength to both possess someone and completely subdue their soul immediately after death. Mebtob is in a new form of hell now, tortured within her own head for however long Catalyst remains in control, and I suspect Dariush will soon be defining an all-new form of pain to describe her experience as well, despite me telling her to stand down... She's gone to bathe. But what's that? An election, already? How the hell is this justified?

Gizogin stood upon the stage pile of corpses and garbage, looking particularly pleased with his triumphant return to the political stage.

"I thank you all for electing me mayor, following the completely shocking and unexpected death of our beloved Catalyst, which I had nothing to do with whatsoever. I promise you that, even in these hard times we face, I will not do anything whatsoever to help you. I mean seriously, I have no sense of responsibility whatsoever. I don't know whose idea it was to nominate me, but it was probably a bad idea."

The crowd quickly dispersed. That Aussie Dwarf everyone ignores was looking rather pleased with something, but Zasit's expression already every bit as displeased and embarrassed as the one Erica would have put upon her face if she were currently possessing her. They spoke telepathically:

"Zasit! What's going on? Catalyst hasn't even been buried yet! How have we had time for an election?!"

"Huh? Gizogin said she was found dead this morning and buried downstairs. When did she really die?"

"She hasn't been dead for but 5 minutes! Didn't you hear the screaming? Dear Armok how couldn't you?!"

"Well, yeah... I just thought that was that ghost friend of hers wailing about it..."

"Nope. That was mostly Mebtob, though. She killed Catalyst after Dariush shot her up."

"What? But they were the only two to vote for Gizogin, which outdid me and Mormota... You think they set thi-"

"Of course they did! There isn't shit we can do about it now, but Catalyst may be out for revenge anyway. Oh, by the way; Catalyst took possession of Mebtob. That was the third round of shrieking. Now scoot over I need to do something before you get too involved with-"

"No. Go find someone else to be your bitch. I'm on my break."

I can't believe it... She really just told me to get lost... I thought we were friends... How the hell am I supposed to get someone to open the gates now? We need those liaisons gone, and I've been using too much energy trying to be omniscient to possess someone without their willing it.

And so the ghost of Erica sat and moped for a little over a week before Erica paid her any attention. It was at that point that a frothing, insane bone doctor came running out of the stockpiles and

charged after that Aussie dwarf that nobody ever cared enough about to learn the name of.

ThatAussieDwarf cancels Drink: Interrupted by bone doctor.

The bone doctor was now covered in a mouth-full of booze. "WHERE IS SHE!? WHERE IS THE DEMON?! CLEANSE THE FILTH! BRING HER TO ME!"

The bone doctor beats the crap out of her!

Gizogin arrives, and fires at the bone doctor!

ThatAussieDwarf cancels Receive Ass Kicking: interrupted by Kill Stealing Bitch.

ThatAussieDwarf strikes the bone doctor in the head with her pick, and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The flying bronze bolt sails harmlessly through the now-empty head-space, impacting the wall and chipping the engraving!

Gizogin smashes the steel crossbow on her thigh, warping the steel, shredding the string, and bruising the thigh's muscle.

Meanwhile at the other end of the fortress, under Erica's supervision;

The Ethereal Engraver cancels Be Dead: too insane.

The Ethereal Engraver has gone stark raving mad!

The Ethereal Engraver possesses the peasant-liaison.

The peasant-liaison has fallen into the sea and drowned!



That was fairly amusing. With Zasit once again willing to let me perform the necessary activities of running the fortress, I can... Sit here and do nothing. It's the 18th Opal 539, I have 10 days left to run the fortress before the elections demand a new overseer (funny considering we have a mayor position...), and I can neither think of a single task to request nor do anything to speed up progress on the S-GES, since the entire workforce is involved with it. I suppose I should go grab a drink and consider my exit notices for the next overseer. Then I will bid farewell to my position in this fortress, and hopefully stay on Zasit's good side.

Overseer's exit notice: 28th Obsidian 539.

Congratulations on winning the elections, Overseer. I'm sure you feel the need to celebrate, but I'm also certain that any such celebrations must be brief, as your term begins here, and your personal success – and survival – depends entirely upon the intellectual and physical efforts you apply to your work. I cannot stress this enough, so I simply won't. Contained herein are the orders that I feel are necessary to relay to you, that are now your responsibility to complete as much as they were mine.

Firstly; the removal of all burial districts and subsequent transplant into the upper catacombs and Dead Dwarf Storage area are to be continued. This project was titled the S-GES, or Strategic Ghost Emitter System. It's purpose is obvious; release a shit-ton of ghosts into the fortress on cue. These ghosts will then terrorize everything living within the fortress or in a 3 square mile radius around it, and subsequently do battle with the forces of Queen Led. DO NOT pull the hematite lever, hereafter dubbed the "Big Red Button" in the closet off the south east corner of the control room, unless destruction of the fortress is already absolutely guaranteed. The reason being that the dead will attempt to assimilate survivors into their number, all living, for all eternity. Diagrams for future completion are contained below.

Should the fortress fall, and this system not be engaged, then all worlds are doomed to ten thousand years of misery under the rule of the Goddess of Death. Failcannon is the end of the road, all that is left.

Please search the fortress thoroughly for any coffins I may have missed, tear them down and reinter the dead in the Dead Dorf Storage area.

Next on the list of projects is rationalizing the fortress layout. During my reign I forbid many doorways and walled off many paths into areas of the fortress we no longer use which and have no short term purpose. This has helped greatly in keeping the dwarves in line and their minds on track. If you see it necessary to use them, then by all means do, but please lock down as much as possible.

Now, there were notes on the STFO around here somewhere, but I fail to locate them and thus couldn't tell you how best to continue that project. Essentially, all you need to do to turn on the lowest pump level is construct a horizontal axle along the power transmission at sea level. However, that same power transmission catwalk is forbidden as an accessway due to the extreme dangers of walking into the flow of water out of the STFO. Please, use the overhead walkways and staircases. The next part of the project should be a second level of pumps, in a tighter circle under the currently existing ring, and a third below that, making excavating the ocean floor possible. This project will likely take two years or so to complete.

Furthermore, I recently recieved word from an outside source that an engineer by the name of Mekboy, accompanied by Andreus, Mego, and possibly some other no-skill losers should be arriving sometime in the next year. You should already know that we desperately need migrants, so I expect you to let them in and divvy up their labors appropriately. Especially if there's anyone available for mining duty; don't have them hauling crap, they need to be mining, of course!

Finally, the dwarves don't need to worry about hauling random crap, but, according to the Labor Categorization and Definition Clause, they need to be designated as furniture haulers to construct basic buildings like coffins and slabs, and of course we need them to be interring the dead in said coffins. I undesignated several furniture stockpiles to prevent them tying to stockpile them and thus wasting time.

Good luck, and good riddance, mortals fellow dwarves!

Journal of Catalyst, Elven Studies Major.

I regret what had to be done to Medtob, but after the repeated escapes it was clear that my efforts to contain the influence of Queen Led within my own form were failing, and drastic action was needed. Though once I would have considered it unthinkable to sacrifice one of our own, the stakes were too high to compromise, for either Medtob's life or my own petty morals.

Our individual lives mean nothing, so long as Ungegugath lives on. That is all that matters.

So far it seems my gambit was a success, and Led's mind-twisting power may indeed be banished from our fort at long last. If not... at least I am whole again. What is more... when she was inside my mind, I too saw inside hers. And from that, I *learned* - I learned... such things. And with that knowledge was I able to project my consciousness into this new form.

Led knew not what she did, when she brought the fight to our minds, to my domain. Now, she will have in me an enemy as implacable and as eternal as she herself. Led Shakeoars, **you will learn to fear me**.

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Deathsword III Oslanlulâr has been quite content lately. She had a nice bath recently. She admired a very fine Statue lately. She has complained about the draft lately. She dined in a legendary dining room recently. She slept in a good before recently. She has been haunted by the dead lately. She has earn fine challenged the status of t
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TURN 24 – DEATHSWORD

Failday

From a message engraved on the tombs of Failcannon:

I have been chosen to lead Failcannon for this year, for next year a new, proper overseer will arrive from the mountainhomes to lead us. Our chief medical dwarf, Erica, insists we have to make a new tomb for all our dead, and rig it to collapse and "relase their souls to fight the final battle against the tyranny of Led". Didn't she die some time ago? Not that it matters too much, I just need to find the lever that will collapse it and label it so it can easily be found when the time is right.

From an engraving in the Failcannon tombs:

...decided to call the project "Failday Device". A dwarf named Andreus has arrived, claims to have been here before. I find that unlikely, the few that leave Failcannon never return.

In an emergency [such as the total obliteration of our fort (as unlikely as that sounds)] the Faillever is to be pulled, initiating Failday and, according to Andreus, causing a cataclysm that "will change all universes forever". I don't actually believe in that, but it helps keep us busy.

Post Humus Journal of Erica Wheelcircles the Legendary Die-r

Eureka! I've figured it out! How the water reactors work! You see, the very thought of such a stupid concept causes the trees to rotate in their graves as much as it does any dwarven physicist, and since the trees are part of the waterwheels, the ethereal energy that is collected by the dead from other sources like light or radiated heat is released by the "lunacy reaction" and becomes rotational energy

to power the pump, spurring an even more tremendous "lunacy reaction" from the trees, providing enough rotational energy to meet the needs of most dwarven machinery. The dead seem to become heat sinks at this point though. Perhaps heat has 'pressure' and attempts to evenly distribute itself throughout the space that is now being constantly drained of heat?

Wheelcircles was a rather prophetic name, as it turns out. The living seem rather concerned by my body levitating above the ground as it rotates rapidly. Here's to hoping nobody tries to connect it to a pump and rips my arm off.

Still no idea how trees can produce this reaction though, since they neither have souls nor any intellect whatsoever. Perhaps this natural force elves worship directly influences them and is itself dumbfounded by our idiocy?

From an engraving in Failcannon's Collapsed Tombs

A vile force of darkness has arrived! Goblins are attacking! Well, they would be, if they knew how to climb walls. I wonder why Led keeps sending idiots after us.

From an engraving near the main gate:

Andreus has finished sabotaging modifying on the building and placing the appropriate levers. I also had him re-route the north gate to one of the two orthoclase levers near it and the trap modification to the other one

It also appears Gizogin has grown attached to his crossbow

From an engraving near the main gate:

Oh shit, oh shit.

The ghost of boozedwarf just scared dariush to death. We need to get him back in his grave, and quick

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: The next update of the line wasn't really at the thread, but it's somewhat needed to understand what happens next. I should've considered it before having the Faillever pulled.]

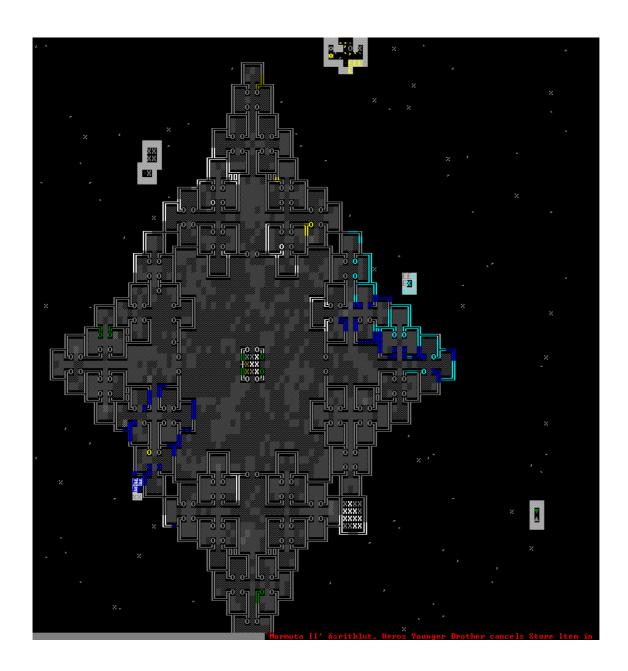
From an engraving in the Failcannon control room

Andreus says it's the time. To activate that... thing I've built. To start "Failday". He's proceeding to pull the lever now. Lur help us all.

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: End of extra update.]









The time had come. All the strife, all the blood spilled, all deaths suffered, all lead to this moment. FailCannon was about to die. A sacrifice for the greater good of all universes, for the rift created by the evil queen Led had to be sealed.

Andreus stood before the red lever and prepared himself, for it could mean the end of him. Forever. "Faillever" was engraved upon the wall nearby, which would trigger the "Failday", a massive cave-in that would release a legion of ghosts filled with righteous fury, ready to fight Led in the final battle.

He pulled it. A thunderous crash happened moments after, as layer after layer of catacombs crashed down upon each other, releasing the spirits trapped within.

All the world felt it. The undead queen Led on her throne, the goblin raiders marching towards FailCannon with the intent to sack it, the elves in their forest homes, the kobolds in their caves, the proud humans in their castles, even monsters forgotten by time felt the cataclysm that was to come and, for the first time since the world was born, they felt fear.

And so FailCannon died, and with it died all who were bound to it: Andreus, Queen Led, Lur Thiefwitch and Ura. The Multiverse was irrevocably changed, and while many monsters had escaped their prisons and now terrorized once-pacific worlds, no longer was it under threat of collapsing upon itself.

None would remember the brave dwarves that gave their lives so it was possible, but they died with a sense of fulfillment in their hearts, and knew such a sacrifice was necessary so others everywhere could continue to live.

* * *

A great crash was heard and the world shook.

The voices of hundred earth-bound souls raised up in unholy rage.

The Goddess of Death was struck the final blow and her darkness scattered through-out the remaining worlds.

Those alive saw as the world tore itself apart, a necessary sacrifice for the good of all.

No one would remember these brave souls, but the gods themselves.

The Rift was filled with life again and balance was restored.

Those who lived through it all took comfort in the dawn of a new day and age.

Years and years flow by like a river flowing from the mountains.

Today seven dwarves set out to live their dreams and build a new home.

As the mountain homes rejoiced in celebration of the building of a new fortress, one young dwarf stands and watches in amazement.

"I would like to someday settle a fort," the young lad said to his father.

"You will," the father replied.

"I can go with my friends," the little boy said matter-of-factly.

"Oh, yes. You and those little rascals are nearly inseparable."

"Robocorn can be our expedition leader. Samrek's father is a doctor, so by then he might be a doctor too." The little boy's eyes flashing in excitement. "Oglokoog is already good a digging holes, so he can be our miner. Heyguys can make stuff for us to sell. Urist the Blue is already a good fighter and can be our military commander. And Krimson can be our seventh!"

"And Andreus," he father asked, "what would be your job?"

"Well..." the boy begins with a thoughtful look, but trails off as he sees a strange dwarf boy looking at him curiously.

"Hello Andreus," the dwarf says to the boy. "I am so glad to meet you."

Andreus looks at the other boy and doesn't recognize him at all. Adreus's father walks away and lets the children talk.

"A new dawn has begun Andreus," the other boy said quietly. "One you helped bring along. Dusk is gone, twilight has ended and soon my strength shall wain as dawn gives in to day. You have a gifted soul young dwarf. You are destined for greatness, but let me give you a warning. Greatness will come to you, but do not let your ambition run wild as it once did. You are free of the sins you committed and are no longer bound to that fate. You and the rest of the souls you touched were given a second chance in this bright new day. Don't waste it."

With that the other boy walked into the crowd and left Adreus there to puzzle out what was said. The words meant nothing to little Adreus now, but with time the young child will understand. Then Adreus ran into the crowd to find his friends and talk about the adventure of starting a fortress. Before long the seven children built up a play fort from left over boulders. They played for days in the small play fort and occasionally slept in the little fort at night. Many imaginative adventures were had, jokes were told and songs were sung. Over the little fort's door hung a small wooden sign. On the sign written in dimple cup blue were the words, "Battelfeiled: Bewaar all dorfs hoo enter here!"

END OF FAILCANNON Maybe

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: While the story ended when I ordered the Faillever pulled, the fort survived for a few more in-game months. Eric Blank guided the fort through it's last moments, as the survivors were killed by enraged forgotten beasts and a kobold invasion. Yup, Failcannon died to *kobolds*.]

HELLCANNON

"That's right kids. You scared the shit out of Yogg Sothoth"

November 7, 2011 – Current Still going. Sort of.

"Like a perfectly pleasant little tundra fortress still busy getting its stuff together, that somebody painted a lovely shade of murder."

"I remember typing that everything was going well. The game somehow found out. So naturally the place is going to hell in a handbasket."

"I think the exchange went as:

DF: Hey, man, your dwarves died, game's over!

Hellcannon: NOPE.
Punchs DF in the face

Helcannon: I FEEEL ALIVEEEEE!!

What kind of an abomination have we created, gentlemen?"

"We have an obsidian penis in front of the fortress. No matter how The Master made it, it is still an obsidian penis. We're keeping it."

"Imagine a dwarf. Stained in blood and vomit. And more blood. Wiping his battleaxe on the sock of a dead dwarf. Turning around to you. His eyes bulging. His breath smelling. His nose dripping. He opens his mouth. And with a voice soaked in loathing and despise, he throws at you the following two words: Tut tut."

Prologue

ThatAussieDwarf, Mego, The Master, Deathsword, gamewizardinnc, Urist Imiknorris, and Sinpwn gathered together in the Queen's chamber. They had all been summoned there by Her Majesty, Led Shakeoars, and were anxious to know what she wished of them. Given the fact that seven were summoned, they could guess what she had in mind.

"All seven of you are very capable dwarves. You stand up to any challenge and never back down. This is why the Mountainhomes need you. As you may have heard, dwarves who go off to a certain area of the continent never return. We have lost contact with all of our settlements. When we send caravans and migrants, they do not return."

The seven dwarves exchanged nervous glances with each other.

"You seven have been chosen to investigate what is going on. You are to build a fortress near the site of the disappearances and carefully observe the happenings. Report to us frequently."

Deathsword cried out, "But, that will surely result in our deaths!"

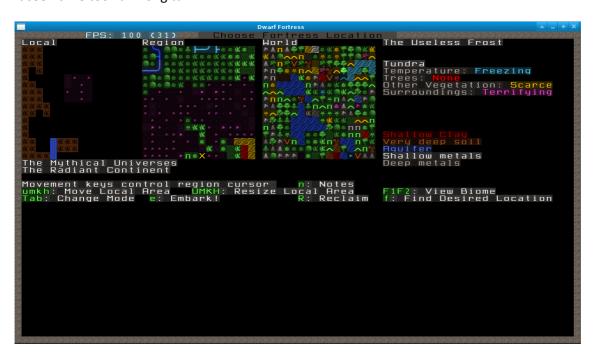
Led turned to Deathsword. "It is a necessary sacrifice. We must know what has happened to our settlements. That region holds some of the most valuable resources in all of Aluorna. Will you accept this challenge?"

Knowing that the question only had one answer, the dwarves hesitantly agreed to investigate the mystery.

Journal of Mego, Chaos Crafter

1st Granite, 202

It seems we took a wrong turn.



The others blamed me, and have decided that, despite my being expedition leader, we need a different overseer. Deathsword was unanimously picked to be the first overseer of our fortress. His

first act as overseer was to declare the name to be Hellcannon. Whatever, man. I'll just lie low until it's the right time to take control.

TURN 1 – DEATHSWORD

Tundrastuck

Deathsword's Log

We have arrived. I'm not good at this writing thing, but Mego tells me that "Overseers need to record their terms". I also remember Mego saying that "I bet those fortresses are that way". Well, that way turns out to end in a gods-forsaken wasteland. It's bloody cold too, and I'm afraid the booze may end up freezing here. May Ovus Frothysuckers curse that Led and her orders.

Ovus Gulguneh, "Ovus Frothysuckers"
Ovus Frothysuckers is a deity of The Rack of Anusing. Ovus nost often takes the form of a male dwarf and is associated with deformity.

Well, the wagon is broken, so we are stuck here. I just hope the migrants she promised actually reach us. Proper lodgings are needed, and fast, so I told The Master and Mego to start digging. There are some skeletal reindeers wandering about, I'd rather not be noticed by them.

Managed to bypass the aquifer, opening a cavern in the process. The Master says that we must *NOT* under any circumstances, dig any stone in the topmost layer of the cavern. As it may cause a flood of unexpected proportions.

We now have full access to the caverns, and the stone contained there, praise the ancestors! Told the miners to get digging, we need that stone.

Miners tell me they can't find metal, just gems. Good job getting us here Mego.

We were attacked by skeletal muskoxen (muskoxes?). We were alerted by the dying sounds of a dog. Conchobar charged them, axe at the ready, but was smashed against the snow, ThatAussieDwarf and gamewizardinnc soon followed.

Deathsword is dead. I, Mego, must say that I am not amused by what I saw in this journal. Urist has sealed of the entrances, both to the surface and the caverns, so we are safe for the moment. The Master, however, is quite unhappy with all this. She never handled stress well, and I fear she may end up snapping.

Skoxes left. But now Skelks have arrived.

Migrants are here, including the cousin of Deathsword, that decided to take up the name "Deathsword the Younger" as kind of homage. I'll be handing this journal to her.

They all got inside safely, besides the new Deathsword we have been joined by Gizogin, Baldash and Eric Blank.

A dwarf named Mego gave me the journal of my cousin, and told me to pick up where she left. Alright then. First off, there's an undead troll in the stairway down, and we are still deciding how we'll handle it.

It left, apparently. Good thing, I guess.

Ghosts! We need to finish that tomb, and fast. More undead "skoxes" too.

Gamewizardinnc has been put to rest. Good thing, too.

A troll got in, and killed Bladash. Carp.

Migrants arrived, got attacked by skelks. Some of them managed to get in, however. Names are Mekboy, Rentorian, Grath, Lord Slowpoke and Anderz.

Merchants came, refused a deal with 200 dorfbucks gain and decided to leave. So I un-built the depot and stole their stuff. We need that booze and metal!

Diary of Mego, (Former) Chaos Crafter

I see them. I don't know how they could be all the way out here. We are several thousand kilometers south of the target location. Nonetheless, they are here. I must go investigate.

FUCKING SKELK! GET THE FUCK AWAY FROM ME! I NEED TO SEE THEM! I NEED TO REACH THROUGH-

(the rest of the page is covered in blood)

Meanwhile, at the trade depot

"No, no, you don't understand, I need way more than 200 Urist profit just to pay death benefits to the families of the guards that died on the way here!are those construction sounds I'm hearing?" "Not at all, don't worry, no need to turn around. Death benefits you say? How about I just order some slabs carved in their memory would that be acceptable?"

"What, no, what would that..... That's a chisel! I know that sound, my father was a stone carver! You're tearing down the depot aren't you?"

"Now now, let's not jump to conclusions here. I'm sorry that you feel that way. I guess we'll just take our goods back down, you guys can find your way back out, right?"

"Oh my gods, you've torn down the trade depot! But that means, under dwarven law, all my goods..... oh Armok, the trademaster is going to kill me."

"I don't think you have to worry about that. The skeletal muskoxen will probably take care of that. Oh, and thanks for the metal and booze! I'll down one in your name tonight!"

Deathsword's Log

No migrants came in winter, Anderz died to a skeletal giant bat and Grath lost a foot to it. Managed to haul all bodies in, and, since there are no over-ground hoofed undead right now, ordered dwarfs to haul clothes and equipment in ASAP. Sell that crap to the merchants. Keep making bone crafts and mechanisms and hunt for metals. I suggest making a little fortification on top of our entrance, and place some marksdwarves there. Masons should finish the tomb soon, just place an extra coffin there for Anderz (un-forbid his corpse, by the way) and, if they cancel it due to undead attack, un-suspend it. Looks like we're stuck to soil layer for now.

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer First Class

What a strange few days. I swear I was just in Failcannon, fighting off a swarm of kobolds, but now I'm somehow here, in this place they call "Hellcannon." I'm still trying to piece together what's going on here, so I'm just going to put down what I can remember, starting just after Failday.

Failcannon was falling apart. The catastrophic disaster that was Failday had taken out some pretty vital support structures, and knocked open a hole into the ocean. Water mixed with the blood of the many hundreds of dead, and some other goo, vomit, and dust from various other sources. I don't know if it was because of the water and air moving around, but I'm pretty sure I heard some eerie moans and wails coming out as well. I heard some of the higher-ups talking about "unleashing the hordes of undead" and "waging war on the gods," or something like that, but I had nothing to do with that stuff. I was just a simple ranger, content so long as I had my trusty crossbow and something to point it at.

Anyway, life went on pretty much as usual after Failday, at least as much as anything could be called normal in Failcannon. Forgotten Beasts, ancient horrors that should never have seen the light of the sun, showed up in greater numbers than ever before, but we managed to hold them off, for a time. Our numbers continued to dwindle, until only ThatAussieDwarf and I stood before everything that wanted us dead. Naturally, ThatAussieDwarf was content to let me handle the fighting, muttering something about his "nefarious scheme." I didn't mind, being a warrior and all. I fought off a few kobold thieves, and went down to check on TAD, and maybe get some sleep before I had to fight again. As soon as I said that I had defeated all the kobolds, he ran straight outside, probably to make his escape or something.

Well, as it happened, I hadn't *quite* killed them all. One of the kobolds was still alive, albeit just barely. He managed to stab ThatAussieDwarf and bring him down by the time I made it back to the surface. When I arrived, they were... I'm not sure I would call it fighting, more like flopping around each other between bouts of unconsciousness. It was kind of pathetic, to tell the truth. Anyway, ThatAussieDwarf didn't make it. He expired from his wounds, leaving me that last survivor in Failcannon. I must admit I didn't take it well. I half-remember some stuff, like throwing down all of my armor and my trusty crossbow, then rushing out to make my final stand. Anyway, I definitely remember being surrounded by the corpses of many kobolds, and then there was something rushing toward my head...

Then, the next thing I knew, I was here. Not only that, but I was a girl, too! Now, I don't have anything against the fairer sex, but it's a little disconcerting waking up in a new body, with no beard. How can I be a great hero and warrior without my beard? Anyway, I'm here now, and I may as well make the most of it. Oh, and strangely enough, all the dwarves here have the same names and personalities as those I knew from Failcannon. It's pretty odd, now that I think on it.

TURN 2 – JOHUOTAR

Unforseen consequences

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: Johuotar didn't make an in-character turn, so below is what happened during year 2]

I finally got around to play the save and as soon as I loaded it skelks appeared and I had to wall of the front entrance off. Then I checked the caverns for any threats and I noticed a skeletal troll climbing the staircase up to the fortress. The troll charged at The Master but he kicked it in the head and ran to the upper levels. Right before the troll destroyed one of the floor hatches the dwarves managed to wall the caverns off. Sadly, wounded "arrow catcher" Garth was stuck in the caverns with the troll. Our stone supply was inaccessible because of the troll attack, so I ordered the burial chamber walls

to be torn down and turned into chairs, tables and doors.

Rridgdway died of melancholy because of failed mood. Mekboy ran outside when I opened the way for merchants and was killed by a skelk. The skelk got name "Dippepstyles", Bekaturnur. I sent militia to avenge Mekboy. Even if it has fancy name it's still just a lone skelk, what could possibly happen? I mean, even in the worst case scenario the squad would be obliterated and I would just wall the fort off.

So what does happen?

Of all the worst things that could happen, THE. WORST. POSSIBLE. THING!

Remalla doesn't wait for the rest of the squad to gather and attacks Bekaturnut alone. Hoof in the head and **Bam!** Remalla is dead. Bekaturnur escapes the area before the rest of the squad gets out.

Skeletal giant bat flies over the wall I built to protect the cavern area and attacks and kills Anzos. Then a horde of skeletal muskoxs attacks the militia squad which had just now gotten itself outside the fortress to deal with the now long gone Bekaturnur. Scaraban falls in the muskox attack. Militia squad runs to the caverns to kill the skeletal giant bat but is again too late and the bat escapes. Deaths of Rridgway, Mekboy, Remalla, Anzos and Scaraban are a great and sudden shock to the residents of Hellcannon. The Fortress is plunged into chaos.

The Master tantrums and punches Gizogin, killing him instantly.

Ogrin goes berserk and is killed by Zeratul.

Militia Commander Gamemaster kills unimportant dwarf.

MomuzC kills MagmaMcFry.

Epithemius goes melancholy.

Choncobar II is bit by a tantruming child.

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer First Class

So there I was, minding my own business, when I hear all of this commotion outside my room. I rush out to see what's going on, and I see my old buddy The Master (no idea why he calls himself that, he's nothing like a Time Lord). I ask him what's going on, but he just punches me in the face! Unfortunately, I had no beard to cushion the blow, and as such, I died instantly. Don't ask how I'm writing this journal, it's kind of a headache (ha!).

Johuotar's turn

Creiydrek is in the middle of meeting hall, armed with wooden training axe and keeps tantruming and calming down. Everytime he tantrums he attacks someone with his axe. He hasn't killed anyone yet but I think he's the most dangerous of all the tantrumers right now.

Dariush is now dorfed as legendary miner and Remalle was re-dorfed as son of Emeraldwind. Andreus got better from his miserable status because his wife Karakzon gave birth recently.

I opened the fort a bit. Should make it more efficient.



I built wall outside so we can store refuse there now. The caverns have similiar walls too, but they're open so arcangelsd doesn't spam me with error messages about how he can't path to the monsters. He's quite good hunter and has killed many giant monsters in the caves.

Its spring already, time for me to end my turn. My turn was quite uneventful, for which I am sorry. I forgot to Dorf myself, the next overseer please Dorf somedorf as "Kaamanen" with custom profession "claustrofobic architect". Mason and architect jobs turned on.

Diary of Mego II, Chaos Crafter

I had no idea where I would show up. Perhaps I would see Swordthunders, the fortress of my ancestor. Perhaps I would find myself at the immortal Battlefailed, before the universe began self-destructing. Where I did appear, however, was completely surprising. I didn't even know this place actually existed.

I was in the Library of the Ancients.

The same place where Andreus learned his alchemical secrets. The same place where he gained the knowledge which ripped apart the universe, and allowed it to be put back together. Infinite knowledge, not meant for mortals, was all around me.

And, on an empty table, a book was opened, gathering dust. It had no title and a nondescript cover. However, as I began reading it, I realized this was that book that Andreus was reading. I must have appeared mere moments after he departed. And, after reading it, I too had gained his knowledge.

Two can play at this game, Andreus. I used my newly-found powers to open a gateway back to Hellcannon. Once there, I saw a herd of migrants arriving. I flew into one and took over the body, so I could begin plotting. And here I am. One question nags the back of my mind:

What exactly AM I plotting?

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer of the Highest Order (deceased)

I'm not entirely sure how long I've been dead now. It's amazing how differently time passes when you're a being of pure thought and spectral energy, free of all those pesky glands and circadian rhythms. Being liberated from the demands of my mortal shell has also freed my mind to focus on the more academic pursuits. I have come up with many ways to reconcile the disputes between relativistic and quantum theories, and have what I believe to be a serious contender for the title of Grand Unified Theory. I have discovered that the world we take as real is merely a crude simulation of a higher plane. I have deduced from first principles an absolute and inarguable code of ethics, along with a simple step-by-step guide to achieving an absolutely meaningful life. I came up with a recipe for a delicious strawberry tart that would bring even the hardest of men to their knees with its beautiful flavor.

All I need now is a way to spread my ideas to the world of the living*. Alas, the living inhabitants of Hellcannon, though certainly an open-minded and receptive lot, appear unable to detect my presence. I have noticed a few beings in similar states to my own, but they seem distracted by the goals they left behind when they died, and also took no notice of me.

*This brings up yet another point; namely, my current state of being. I cannot be certain, but I believe that my undeath is at least partially related to the events that ocurred within the final days of Failcannon. Being now a being of supernatural origin, I am more attuned to fluctuations on the ethereal planes, and have, as such, noticed an abnormal level of otherworldly energy surrounding Hellcannon and its inhabitants, similar to what I felt on Failday, though on a much smaller scale here.

Diary of Ogrin I, Caster.

TURN 3 - STRATEGIA

Minor Issues

From an anonymous graffiti, Clay Loam Wall near the main staircase

Armok preserve us. Overseer Johuotar just called an assembly in the main hall - he was stepping down. Now I know this is just par for the course, dear journal, and he appointed Mormota as his successor before melting away into the crowd and becoming anonymous, but not half an hour later, while drafting his acceptance speech, Mormota had an utter breakdown. He ran off, leaving us without a leader. And then, would you believe it, Strategia stepped forward to take control! That mad old coot with his cheese fixation? We're doomed, doomed I tell you! Oh dear journal, may Ovus Frothysuckers preserve these words, for they are truly to be the last sane writings produced in this fortress.

Strategia, Prophet of Cheese, Overseer of Hellcannon, first and second order given

Smooth over that clay NOW. When you find whoever did that, have them tossed over the topside wall, there are some skeletal reindeer outside who would love to meet a new friend.

Strategia's Journal

Granite 18th 205. Aside from some..... minor issues..... with dissidents, my accession has proceeded smoothly. I don't expect any more trouble, my threats were sufficient to quell any further sign of resistance. I'm even writing this journal over that insubordinate clod's smoothed-over graffiti, that'll teach him! I think it might have been The Master, to tell you the truth - when he saw my people at work at his site of rebellion, he started crying and wailing and fell down on the floor in a crumpled heap, muttering something about skelks between sobs. He's gone completely melancholy. I've decided against the skelk-tossing, though - it wouldn't be fair to the poor soul. Besides, this is

punishment enough, and I can now brandish the threat of locking disrespectful peons in a room with him. Hah.

Granite 21st 205. My underlings bring me reports of one of the random urchins scurrying about acting strange, they say he's become "withdrawn from society". To tell you the truth, if this elfhole passes for "society", I'd like to withdraw from it too. Anyway, I was going to tell you about the exploratory- Hey, keep it down with the shou Honestly, I almost *wrote* that before I caught myself. Turns out a troll bashed its way through one of the cavern walls. Time to see if this place has any kind of military worth its rock salt. We've got enough weapons, that's for sure.

So the secretive child was gathering rocks in the cavern, apparently, and is completely - and I mean *completely* - oblivious to the troll following him around, up and down the staircase. When it crashed into the main hall, it spooked all my minions. For that, *it will die*. I swear it. Nobody messes with my minions but me.

The troll caught up with the child and *pinched* it to death.

Aussie Log

Strategia has been made mayor. All goes as planned... I think...

Strategia's Journal

Granite 23rd 205. Turns out we didn't actually have a military ready, so I conscripted a group of "volunteers" composed of anyone who had any kind of weapon skill, and any potential threats to my rule just to be on the safe side. I actually got a real volunteer for the position of militia commander, which seemed very suspicious until she convinced me that she really was Not That Aussie Dwarf, which seemed very specific, but something in the way she said it convinced me she was being honest. She gathered her troops and sallied forth, down the stairway into the caverns where the troll, appropriately dubbed Acheclench, had just brutally murdered a poor child. No hair off my back if you ask me, but this particular child was apparently about to make a legendary artifact, so punishment had to be exacted.



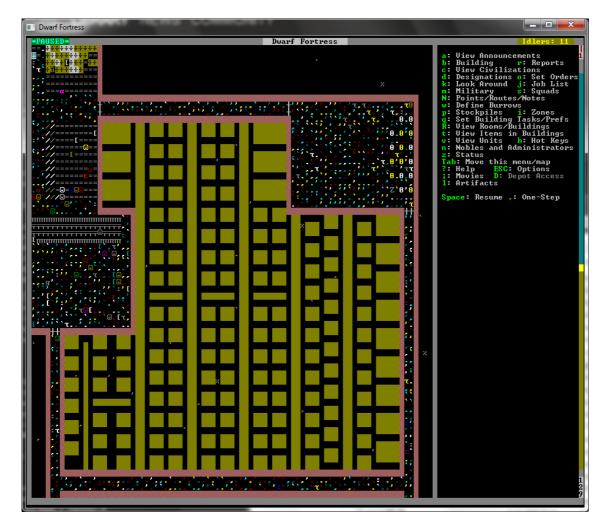
Kaamanen, who bears a striking resemblance to our former Overseer, was entirely coincidentally the first militadorf on the scene, charging at the murderous beast with axe in hand. After baiting the troll for a short while, she got down to business and severed the troll's femoral artery with her axe. By

that time, the rest of the squad, dubbed The Craterous Quakes for the deep pits they leave in their enemies' skulls (or so they tell me, given that they were formed two days ago), came barrelling down the stairs and jumped Acheclench like a pack of badgers. Eventually, the fight was over.



Acheclench had tried to run away, but found herself backed against a wall, so she doubled back and fled right into the militia squad. Her mutilated corpse now lies broken and mangled on the ground, a testament to what happens to people who hurt my minions without my permission! Meanwhile, Remalle's ghost had also drifted down the stairs, and was present at the site of the execution. Such dedication, even in death.

Granite 24th 205. Hail hail, the troll's dead. And the gap in the wall has been repaired. Unfortunately, the minion who did this, EmeraldWind, and her infant, Remalle, decided to build the wall from the outside. Normally, I'd tear down the wall to let them in so I could make an example of the mother for being stupid and give the child reason to resist my rule when it grows up, but it looks like a skeletal troll has caught their scent (or however it is skeletons hunt). So unfortunately I won't be able to berate this woman for her stupidity, before having her tossed over the topside wall. Oh well. On a more positive note, I sketched out some plans for modular living space on the main level:



As you can see, it's quite generous, but then again evil overlords who don't provide at least *some* amenities for their minions tend to get murdered in their sleep. The trick is to give them just enough comfort to make them thankful, and scaring the everloving Urist out of them everywhere else. The larger spaces are designated to be offices for administrators and the like, can't run a proper empire without one!

Granite 24th. EmeraldWind managed to outrun the skeletroll around the cavern wall, and lost it. I'm allowing her to remove a section of the wall so she can return home. She will be punished, somehow, but her quick thinking has earned her her life. I may decide to simply draft her as a wrestler when she returns instead of tossing her out into the snow. I have also begun construction of a layer of fortifications on top of the cavern walls, so we don't get any uninvited guests climbing or flying over, and any future marksdwarves will be able to shoot at anything that approaches.

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer of the Highest Order (deceased):

I've been trying to get into contact with some of the many wizards and necromancers in Hellcannon, but they seem to be ignoring me. Why will nobody pay me any attention? I have many brilliant ideas to share with the world!

Seriously, I'm beginning to think that the only path available to me is to try and inhabit another dwarf's body.

Slate 2nd, 205. Been a while since the last time I wrote on this wall in this journal, things have been a bit hectic. Two more volunteers, reteip9 and Phantom, have joined my military, and some fellow by the name of Urist Imiknorris has taken up the position of Sherriff, undoubtedly he wishes to become my loyal right-hand dorf. Unfortunately, he apparently lacks the facilities his job requires. Bah. Fortification of the cavern outpost proceeds apace, and no new threats have been spotted in the immediate vicinity. It looks like even the undead feel the chill of winter in their bones. (Which I imagine is the only way they can still feel anything at all, really.) One of Dariush's exploratory digs has uncovered a second layer of caverns, which have been sealed off immediately to prevent any..... incursions.



The cavern appears to be rich in tetrahedrite, garnierite and underground flora, but is thankfully almost devoid of fauna. I am thinking of sending an expedition down to secure these caverns like we did the ones above, so that we can begin smelting our own metals, even if it is only copper and nickel. The cavern also contains several veins of cobaltite, which arcangelsd, the resident scientist, would like to experiment with. His excited babbling was hard to follow, but it seems like he wants to pile up some cobaltite and pitchblende in a confined space, then smash it with a drawbridge. I might indulge him just for the amusement value, provided we find some pitchblende. If we do, I'll have the device built in the main hall - watching someone fail in front of everyone he knows is so satisfying, and reinforces their loyalty, and if it succeeds the rest of the workforce will be intimidated by its power. My militia commander mumbled something about a "zen at Osgam bit", no idea what that means.

Journal of Gizogin, Chief Rawmancer of the Wizengamot (deceased)

I've given up on trying to talk to the residents of Hellcannon, at least for the present. I have chosen a nice, secluded corner of one of the food stockpiles as my haunt. Mostly, I just like nibbling at the food (being a ghost, I cannot manipulate physical objects at nearly the same level as I could while alive, nor do I actually require sustenance, but the attempt and the slightest taste are enough for me).

Oh, and I have discovered some new and fun things about being a ghost. Obviously, there are the abilities to walk through walls, disappear, and fly, but I can also make a pretty deathly wail. How this works without vocal cords, I have no idea, but it scares the HFS out of cats (a bit odd, that. Cats can, I

believe, see and hear me; however, since they are cats, they act completely indifferent to my presence).

Journal of Mego II, Chaos Crafter

Strategia's militant rule is becoming bothersome. I barely have any time to work on my grand design, with his constant ordering around of us all. Plus, he's very nosy, and I would prefer to keep this project under the radar. For now, let's just say that, in a few years, dwarves will be having much fun with the Fun.

Journal of Lord Reudh, ME!

I like this Strategia fellow. I like this entire place! At the moment I don't have a room, but so what! I AM A HUNTER. ANIMALS WILL FEAR ME AND MY BONES... I mean my BONE BOLTS! Those blasted wildlife keep me inside- what to do but laze around? I swear, living as a hunter in somewhere too dangerous to hunt is luxury! Ahahahahahaha! Yes, I did just write laughter, what of it? WHAT OF IT? Cheese seems to be the order of the day. Cheese is good, it keeps us healthy! But alcohol makes the world go round, hmwhat?

Diary, DIARY ARE YOU LISTENING? I lost a friend today. Pain is good. It's the spice of life, but too much spice makes you need the latrines, am I right?
I think this fort will go far! Guys, let's have a party!

Journal of Gizogin, True Mancer of all things Raw, Patron Saint of Crabcakes, Champion of That Place where I Helped some Old Man with his Chickens (deceased)

All the dwarves in this fortress are crazy!

Oh, and because I know I've been wondering how it is that I can write in my journal despite the lack of any ability to manipulate physical objects, I decided to observe myself making this record (ah, the many quirks of being dead). As it happens, I don't carry around the ghosts of the quill and notebook I was holding as I died, as I previously thought. Ghosts of inanimate objects? That's just silly! Why, I had been wringing my ghost-hat trying to figure out how such a thing could even exist. The truth is much simpler. I actually just summon up the energy of the Rift that occupies the location in space-time that was once Failcannon (or will be; technically, Hellcannon takes place earlier in time than Failcannon, but it happened (happens?) in my past), and scribe my thoughts on the Firmament itself. I don't know how I didn't think of that before.

Journal of Mego II, Chaos Crafter

Gizogin is scribbling on the thin fabric of space-time that separates Hellcannon from Failcannon again. I swear he's trying to give me a stroke. I am the one who makes sure those rips don't happen again, after all. If it rips open, we will all be sucked through into that dying universe. Perhaps I should teach him the ways of temporary possession so that we will be safe. The others do not know how close we are to another universe, one that is about to reach its end. They think Battlefailed and Failcannon are just legends. But I know the truth now. I know that-

ARMOKDAMNIT STRATEGIA I AM BUSY GO FIND SOMEONE ELSE TO SEARCH FOR MINERALS!

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer, Order of Gizogin (First Class), Three-time Winner of the coveted Golden Spleen Award, Official Bestower of Silly Titles (deceased)

Written on the very foundations of the multiple universes

I was just going on my regular daily phase-through-walls, when a happy bit of chance brought me into contact with a certain journal. It seems that Mego not only knows of my presence, but also of a way to return to a state similar to life, if only temporarily. Why was I not contacted? Does no dwarf in this fortress care for me? This is truly a sad day for me. I think I'll go moan softly at that cat over there.

Oh, there was something about my continued tampering with the stability of the multiverse in the journal, too. I wasn't really paying attention, through the combination of dejection and seething rage. I'll assume it was praise and admiration of the way I'd effortlessly skirted the problem of not having a body anymore, without myself even knowing. I'm still mad and sad, though. You hear me Mego? Your praise does nothing to ease the pain! I'll never forget the way you ignored me for all this time (what's it been now, a year? Two? I forget)!

Journal of Mego II, Chaos Crafter

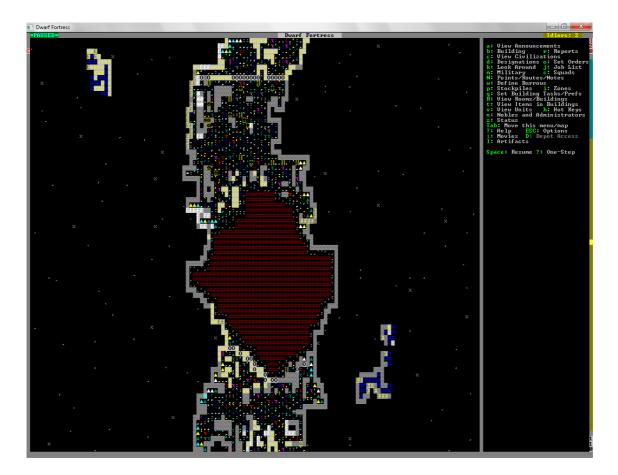
To Gizogin:

This is why we can't have nice things: somebody will end up graffitiing the fabric of the universe with their journal entries.

Strategia's Journal

Slate 10th 205. Dariush is rapidly becoming one of my more favoured underlings. The woman mines like a reverse cave-in, and her exploratory shafts have uncovered several veins of galena. I have told her to excavate them ASAP, so we can build up a stockpile of the ore. I'm also planning to exploit the second cavern layer, walling off a perimeter to safely chop down the fungus-trees and mine the tetrahedrite. We may lack the iron ore and flux stone required for the good stuff, but we'll at least be able to smelt our own metals, so I can begin building my military. Also, a child was born. Good to see my minions are working hard to produce the next generation of recruits. I find that beginning indoctrination early cements their loyalty like nothing else.

Slate 14th 205. Praise the miner! Dariush dug down to a *third* layer of caverns, and her shaft opens up right next to the top of a magma pipe. Her keen senses further reveal that this vein of Armok leads to a giant underground magma sea; and that there is a deposit of adamantine in the wall. While we may not yet be able to reach the blessed godmetal, surely this is a sign that Armok himself has blessed my reign. I have ordered the area immediately surrounding the entry shaft walled off, so we may reap the benefits of this magma pipe without worrying about intrusions.



Slate 17th 205. It appears that some half-frozen idiots have been sighted on the horizon, trudging through the snowstorm. It appears that there are more and more people who are throwing off Queen Led's yoke in favour of mine - excellent. This pleases me greatly. I have had a temporary entry carved into the topside wall, so my fresh minions could enter before they froze to death. I've also ordered the militia to go topside, in case any of the local skeindeer get uppity and need a smackdown.

Slate 18th 205. My lookouts report that the migrants stretched themselves out over several miles. Great, this means it will take days for them to arrive. Oh well. At least the workers in the third cavern layer sensed another vein of godmetal, nowhere near the first one in the magma sea, and much more easily accessible. My right-hand dorf assures me that everything is going to plan.....

Slate 23rd 205. The migrants are finally, FINALLY inside. I have had the wall repaired, and the militia was sent down to the first cavern outpost again. The preliminary defences in the third cavern layer are complete, and the first magma smelters are complete, if not yet operational. Not Aussie reports that there were some more "volunteers" among the migrants, and has assembled a vestigial second squad. Even better, one of the migrants turns out to have been a dorf whose reputation precedes him - our new Chief Medical Dwarf is Dr. Zuntîr Mengelbel. I have heard many things about Dr. Mengelbel's work, and I believe he will make a fine addition to my leadership corps.

Journal of Gizogin, Seventh Level Rawmancer (no longer deceased)

Mego finally gave in to my constant hauntings and promised to help me return to life as soon as I found a suitable host. At this point, I'd be happy with just about anything, but as luck would have it,

an entire wave of dwarves showed up. I found a dwarf whose body met my requirements, and here I am. It's going to take me a while to get used to being physical again, but I'm sure I can rise to the challenge.

My return to the physical world has brought another matter to my attention. Namely, my image. Up to this point, I have failed to establish myself as the truly powerful reality-bender that I am. I am a Rawmancer of the highest level, after all. It's time I acted like one.

As a fortunate side effect of my unnatural return to life, I have retained many of my otherworldly senses and abilities, which, when combined with my already potent powers, should make me a force to be reckoned with.

Strategia's Journal

Felsite 15th 205. All quiet on the dwarven front. In light of the ballooning population, I have appointed my loyal henchman, Urist Imiknorris, to the position of Captain of the Guard, in addition to his position as Sheriff. I overheard a minion, Lord Reudh, boasting in the dining room about how she was going to become a world-renowned marksdwarf, the best that ever lived. When I pulled her aside and offered her a position as captain of a marksdwarf squad, however, she declined. Highly suspicious. I'm beginning to suspect she's the one behind the slanderous - nay, blasphemous - graffiti that marred my accession. I've had Not Aussie put her under increased surveillance. After all, anyone who would decline such an honour must be a traitorous rebel. Also, the lookouts spotted some frostbitten elves coming from the north. After some consideration, I ordered the peons to put up a trade depot in the topside perimeter, I'll open a gateway when it's done. Even though they're elves, they might have goods we need, and we could always use the trade depot as a decoy and seize the goods by force.

From the logs of Deathsword, former overseer:

I am ruined! Ruined, I say! When I arrived and discovered that my cousin had died and that I was the new overseer, I swore not to repeat the same mistakes he did. After all, he may be my uncle, but what kind of overseer doesn't create some sort of defense against animals? My brother must've gone insane when faced with leading this place, considering they were supposed to go to the Plains of Ooze and not to... this place. This fortress was supposed to be founded by another group and be called something else, not Failhell Hellcannon. In his journal, my nephew kept blaming Mego for all his problems. And then they took the power from me, those ungrateful bastards. They'll see. They will **ALL** see. I will avenge my sister and all shall fear the name Deathsword! ... after I finish eating this wonderful plump helmet.

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer

Disaster! As I wrote earlier, I came up with several revolutionary theorems and one delicious recipe, but when I went to retrieve them to share with the world, they were nowhere to be found! In their place, there was just this giant gash in the Firmament. I'm worried about the implications this will have. I mean, if someone stole my information, there's no telling how that strawberry tart recipe could be used for evil!

Why yes, I am insane. Thank you for noticing!

Strategia's Journal

Felsite 21st 205. The Master is dead, long live The Master. Actually no, he's really, definitely dead. The melancholy sod has died of thirst. About time too, he was starting to look like dwarf jerky. Unfortunately, this also means I won't be able to lock anyone in a room with the melancholy bastard anymore - I guess I'll just have to use the lava shaft for all the punishments then.

Felsite 22nd 205. Mayor Karakzon has mandated the production of 3 platinum items. We don't have any way to make platinum. Rather more importantly, *since when do we have a mayor*?! Which one of you miserable little underlings forgot to inform me of this? I swear I will start hurling random tossers into the magma pipe until one of you fesses up. I strongly suspect Lord Reudh, or maybe it was The Master after all, and it wasn't the thirst that killed him so much as the fear of what I would do to him when he told me. Eeexcellent. Also, one of the elven merchants got his scrawny ears murdered by the local muskskoxen. Its camel is making a run for it, drawing the muskskoxen away, while the merchant apparently pulled its carrying harness off while dying. There's a dead elf surrounded by random crap out in the snow - I'll have to wait for the muskskoxen to disappear entirely before I send out my brave, brave soldiers to protect the random idiots carrying it inside.

Felsite 28th 205. My minions are diligently working on securing the valuables (and other miscellaneous items), while the camel is still being chased by the muskskoxen. It strays close enough to my minions for the muskskoxen to spook them from time to time though, so I'm having my brave soldiers relocate to screen the haulers as needed. Wait - I just heard they've strayed too close, and the militia is moving to engage the muskskoxen. This could go very well or very badly.....

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer

I'm in a spot of trouble right now. I was supposed to tell Strategia that we had held mayoral elections, but between my many trips to the Firmament and the worrying over my lost recipe, it completely slipped my mind. I think it would be better to come clean, but I'm worried about what my punishment will be. Strategia will find out anyway, though, and if it didn't come from me, it'll be that much worse...

In other news, some more of my earlier journal entries have been disappearing, even after I had drawn more energy from the Rift to preserve them. I've already lost the one where I battled the massive ecto-crab, the two with the new spell research I'd been conducting, and the rather embarrassing revelation about my parents.

Journel of Karakzon

...

what just happened?

why do i have a sudden urge for platinum? oh god no, could it be? im a NOBLE! NOOOOO! IVE HEARD TALES OF THIS DISEASE!

ok ok calm down. deep breaths try think back.

...

Lets see: I spent the last few weeks in the food hold during my breaks talking to folks, drinking, twiddling my thumbs and wondering when ill be back on minning duty, we get into the usual dwarven boredom tradition of how many kegs can you down at once?

Then some fool comes up after ive just downed 3 kegs in one and says to me "Karakzon, your mayor now my lad, do us proud!" wile my eyes were slowly glazing over and some of those millatery girls beards started to look mighty fine.. blood matter and all. Did i end up back at one of their bunks? i cant remember...

ahem NO ONE LOOK AT THIS YOU SODS! THIS IS MY DIARY... IT JUST HAPPENS TO BE A WALL. WALK RIGHT BY DAMNIT!

First order of buisness: Find the manager, find the book keeper, talk to the overseer and try get an office of stone set up. Oh, and try get someone to become my scribe, i dont think keeping score with

my pick would go down well when the liason comes. that stuffy git, hmm, that means i get to put him down a notch or two eh? this shouldnt be too bad afterall..

Second order of buisness: Request we get a prison made so the capt of the guard dosent brutalise anyone too hard and try get some weaponry and armour... Mind, by the sounds of it, their might not be many people left to wear it by time ive done with this:/

Third: My new title to be!: llataelbonaton

and my scribes title when its arranged: hcitbelttilym

The first battle of Hellcannon

Kaamanen is the first to fall, taking a shattering kick to the foot that temporarily stuns her, allowing the muskskox to tear off her right arm and kick her in the head twice. Alas poor Kaamanen, we hardly knew ye. Ye shall be remembered.

Gamemaster gets in a few good attacks, but is kicked in the stomach a few times until she vomits. Deathsword and Not Aussie are whacking away at the muskskoxen while they're busy attacking other militiadorfs.

The muskskoxen have been overcome, and Remalle's ghost has been laid to rest, but a group of skelk are approaching from the south.

The skelks appear oblivious to the dorfs for a while, until one of them makes a break for a hauler. The militia is sent in to kill the beast. A dog is first on the scene, and gets its skull caved in.

One of the skelks bites Phantom in the hand and shakes it viciously, tearing it to shreds. Rurik enters a martial trance.

Ogrin takes a beating, until he falls over and gets kicked in the head. Exitus Ogrin.

Rurik leaves the martial trance, right in the middle of three or four skelks. Do svidaniya.

Urist McJoeBloggs takes a heavy beating, gets his spine almost snapped, and then bleeds out. arcangelsd apparently forgot to pick up crossbow bolts, so naturally walks right up to the skelks - and gets his arm torn off. He rolls around on the ground while the skelks are using him for wrestling practice. arcangelsd soon joins the choir of angels.

Gizogin gets used for bowling practice, until the skelks get a strike.

opti plays matador with a skelk until she falls over and gets her brain splattered all over a skelk's hoof

A nameless nobody wanders blithely into a second group of skelk that has appeared elsewhere, and becomes a smear on the landscape.

Phantom dies like many others, getting bowled over and kicked in the head.

By this point, the second militia squad has been wiped out.

I order the survivors to break off and run. The day has been lost. Fully a third of half the militia now lies dead in the snow.

Urist Imiknorris gets upset at all the death and throws a tantrum.

Andreus starts beating on Ledi for no apparent reason. EmeraldWind throws a tantrum but calms down after screaming for a few seconds.

Deathsword is still lying unconscious in the snow.

Meanwhile, a Skeletal Blind Cave Ogre has ambled into what will be the perimeter of the second cavern outpost. Oh goody. What's left of the militia is dispatched to deal with it.

The Skeletal Blind Cave Ogre is trying to attack Rentorian, but fails because Rentorian keeps moving and the Skeletal Blind Cave Ogre is, well.... blind.

Meanwhile, Urist is still tantruming.

The ogre gets a good grip on Rentorian's toe and tosses him into a wall hard enough to make his extremities come off.

I go down to take a look at the beast, and it somehow sniffs me out and chases me. It takes great pleasure in squeezing my fingers, toes and teeth. Finally, it BITES THE TOP OF MY SKULL OFF. BLOOD

EVERYWHERE.

Urist has calmed down. Insolent wretch. My death should have made her melancholy at the very least.

Andreus and Urist are grappling on a chair in the dining hall. An evening's entertainment in Hellcannon.

Gamemaster is down in the caverns, fighting the ogre. The ogre rips off her leg.

Andreus is now officially throwing a tantrum. No, really? You've only been using Urist as a punching bag for two days now.

The ogre chases Gamemaster around the cavern, as she rolls and hops to avoid its strikes. Everyone who goes down to build the walls panics and runs.

reteip9 makes it to the cavern and fights the ogre, but gets his wrist broken for his efforts. The ogre has apparently earned the name "Twinkletruss" at this point.

Another Skeletal Blind Cave Ogre shows up. Fun times.

EmeraldWind thought it would be a good idea to saunter up into the snow and attack a small herd of skelks. Alone. With her baby, Remalle. DOUBLE KILL

Andreus has calmed down. Maybe now he'll stop playing "punchbuggy clay loam wall".

Urist, meanwhile, is still having a punch-up with the fortress at large. The fortress at large is not amused and caves his skull in. Also one of the ogres bites a nameless pump operator's skull open.

Lord Reudh bites and punches one of the ogres, but it doesn't do much of anything.

Dr. Mengelbel joins the fray. Lord Reudh and Creiydrek are throwing tantrums. Some pets die. These are apparently all unrelated.

LordSlowpoke and Andreus are throwing tantrums. Andreus says he's calmed back down a few seconds later. I doubt it.

Gamemaster and one of the ogres are running in circles, Benny Hill-style. Gamemaster is actually damaging some tendons, so this one particular fight may be ever so slowly drawing to a close. Yes, this would be the same Gamemaster that HAD HER LEG RIPPED OFF. I promote her from The Strategist to The Unstoppable Force.

Conchobar calmed down. I didn't even know she was tantruming. It appears as though everyone is. Also, a nameless leatherworker is no longer enraged. When did he rage? I think the announcements screen is lying to me. It said there would be +beef tallow roasts+.

reteip9 was enjoying a nice lie down in the caverns, resting. The lazy git caught an ogre fist to the head. Said ogre is now chasing two nameless dorfs around the cavern.

Creiydrek and Lord Reudh calm down. I'm pretty sure they'll find another reason to go into rage mode pretty soon though. Probably the fact that everyone is dying horrible, horrible deaths.

The ogre catches up to the nameless stoneworker and does what it does best - bite through the skull. Yay.

Eric Blank is tantruming. One of the ogres disappears. No report of its death, no body, just..... gone. I suspect reality isn't quite as fixed as it should be.

Now that she can no longer dodge, Gamemaster has apparently been immobilised. Oh, and the surviving ogre appears to have found the staircase.

Zeratul is tantruming, a nameless stoneworker has ambled into a drift of skelk topside, Mego is tantruming and Eric is attacking the mayor. Conchobar throws a tantrum and calms down immediately.

Andreus runs off into the snow and gets scared off by a skelk. He's pretty much done for. Eric Blank calms down. Riiight.

Gamemaster and Conchobar are throwing tantrums. Gamemaster presumably because she can no longer amuse herself baiting Skeletal Blind Cave Ogres. Conchobar just for the hell of it.

Darvi volunteers to be the new militia commander. Wait, when did Not Aussie die? During the skelk fight, apparently. Sneaky little git.

The ogre, Apessiege, has descended the stairway - phew - to the magma pipe level. One of the skelk has found Deathsword lying in the snow.

Apessiege is chasing a nameless herbalist around. Zeratul calms down. Deathsword's internal organs

have pretty much shut down. Looks like the ordeal might be winding down.

MomuzC goes berserk. Never mind I said anything. He's chasing a bunch of dorfs into the stone stockpile.

Deathsword's torture continues. Her heart is broken. (No really, that's literally what it says.) Darvi is being an idiot and goes to pick up equipment outside. He's startled by a skelk, and stops moving entirely.

Mego calms down. MomuzC abuses and murders a tame blue peachick, somebody's pet. Another skelk saunters over to participate in the slow murder of Deathsword.

The Skeletal Blind Cave Ogre, Apessiege, has by this time apparently bullrushed the nameless herbalist it was chasing..... into the magma pipe. So long, sucker!

Gamemaster calms down. I disband what's left of the militia.

MomuzC and Lord Reudh fight. Lord Reudh eventually punches MomuzC in the head. Brain bits everywhere. Andreus is melancholy.

There are four skelks pummelling Deathsword now. We have come full circle.

Another skelk finishes off another nameless herbalist. I swear we have (or rather, had) more nameless herbalists than you can (could) shake a +bismuth bronze spear+ at.

Lord Reudh is upset at killing a fellow dwarf and tantrums. Mego calms down, then tantrums, then calms down again. Lord Reudh calms down. Several others are still tantruming.

A child is tantruming. Is this news?

Andreus XIV has his arm torn off by a skelk, like many before him, and bleeds to death. The skelk in question goes to beat up on Deathsword. Lord Reudh goes stark raving mad.

Deathsword bleeds out. She was apparently wielding a battle axe, a buckler and a war hammer. Very badass, but that means that we now have a battle axe, a buckler and a war hammer we can no longer use.

The Skeletal Blind Cave Ogre, Apessiege, is apparently STILL ALIVE (or rather, UNDEAD). IN THE MAGMA SEA. Also, in support of my "universe is still broken" theory, it keeps getting caught in clouds of Gamemaster's boiling blood. Quite aside from the fact that this generates smoke, inside 7/7 magma, Gamemaster is still way up in the second cavern layer, lying on the ground and being pissed off. So how does her blood keep getting down into the magma? My guess is wormholes. If it was just a coating that Apessiege had picked up, it'd have boiled off by now. Therefore wormholes.

Mego throws a tantrum and immediately calms down. It's rapidly becoming a Hellcannon tradition. The topside wall has been closed up. Finally.

And thus end the first three weeks of Hematite.

From the diary of Lord Reudh, me!

(found engraved in a tablet stored in Reudh's beard)

So you know what happened today? Mr. Strategia, Armok bless his soul, ordered the military to take care of these strange creatures. I wanted to hunt, but you know what? I'm glad I didn't say yes to being a marksdwarf.

So many people got killed though that it just makes me angry. I don't like him anymore. There was nothing to hunt so I pretty much spent my whole day socialising! That's the life... but it makes me sad that friends died. I HATE IT. HATEHATEHATE! STRATEGIA! YOU KILLED MY FRIENDS!

Oh dear, I have gone a little crazy. YOU FOOLS! WHY DID YOU DIE? I LOVED EVERY ONE OF YOU! You nincompoops! You vile, stupid, foolish elves! I HATE YOU ALL. WHY DID YOU DO THIS TO ME?

Oh sod off you skeletal behemoth. You pointy thing! I am so hungry I might just eat you! Yes, run away... RUN AWAY!

What's this? Momuz? You silly vanilly, you can't hurt your friends because you're sad! Go hurt the others! I will hurt you, I warn you, I know fisticuffs! I do, I swear!

You fool. Now I am elbows deep in your head and you are not awake anymore. Hehehehe... Oh dear. I shouldn't have done that.

Reudh cancels Inscribe Tablet: Insane Lord Reudh has gone Stark Raving Mad!

The last writing of Deathsword, found written in the snow with blood:

This hurts. A lot. I am serious. These things are over me. No one is coming to get me. No one is coming to take me home. I hear shouts, screams and maniacal laughter coming from the fort entrance. I'm also hearing skeletal blind cave ogres biting people in the skull, but that's probably just my imagination. Mr. Skelk, would kindly cave-in my skull already?

Journal of Insidious Plotting

Faked my death to get out of being Militia Comannder. That was not a job for someone wanting to keep their limbs or have a long-term career. Keeping an eye out for migrants or anyone the fortress won't miss that I can disguise myself as. Must remember to sneak some supplies off the next caravan for my Junior Disguise Deluxe kit - I'm almost out of horsehair beard extensions and hairdyes.

Journal of Gizogin, Really Ticked Off Rawmancer (deceased (again!))

I can't believe this! Just as I was beginning to get used to my new body, I wind up dying again! Oh well, at least I know how to return this time, so I'll be back on my non-ghostly feet again just as soon as I find a new host.

It's odd, but I seem to be out Firmament for my journals. There are all these cracks all over the place, and it's

should get through. It's probably for the best, anyway.

Journal of Mego II, Chaos Crafter

FUCKFUCKFUCK WHY DOES EVERYTHING GO SO WRONG

Whew. I'm ok now. Good to blow off some steam every once in a...

I FUCKING HATE YOU ALL YOU MAKE ME WANT TO THROW THINGS AT YOU

...while. They say that keeping things bottled up...

...can cause problems mentally. Luckily, I never have that problem.

On a related note, things feel kinda breezy, despite there being no windows open. I'm going to go see if I can find the source of the draft.

What the fuck.

There is a fucking hole in the fucking fabric of fucking space-time itself. That idiot Gizogin didn't listen to my warnings, and kept scribbling all over it. This is what happens when people don't listen to me. WHY DON'T PEOPLE EVER LISTEN TO ME?!?!?!? NOW I HAVE TO CLEAN UP THIS MESS BEFORE ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE IN HELLCANNON (AGAIN)!!!!!!!!

Mego cancels Mend Fabric of Space-Time: Throwing tantrum.

[From Strategia's post in the thread shortly after the events above: "I'll get on an update tonight, complete with a list of survivors. In the meantime, here's something I wanted to share with you guys. I've been reading Battlefailed again, and, well.....

- Skeletal muskoxen beating up militiamen
- Skeletal elks beating up everyone
- One dorf lying on the ground unconscious while a pack of skelks are mangling him
- Dorfs throwing tantrums and going berserk
- One, fairly useless artifact
- The situation being described as "going to hell in a handbasket"
- Year 3

I swear, Hellcannon IS Battlefailed. Minus the ocean and titan. Must be because of the new world gen that history is repeating itself."]

Journal of Gizogin, Totally Not an Evil Mastermind, Just a Rawmancer

Because Mego apparently has such a big problem with me tearing down the walls of reality and bringing forth the end of days, I've temporarily possessed this dwarf to write my journal on more mundane materials. Unfortunately, that means this journal will be much less safe from prying eyes. As such, I will begin my actual journal entry in code.

Lw vhhpv wkdw pb dfwlrqv duh eulqjlqj rq d uhshdw ri wkh hyhqwv ri Edwwohidlohg, mxvw dv sodqqhg. Vllq L zloo rqfh djdlq soxqjh wkh zruog lqwr gdunqhvv.

The best part? Nobody suspects a thing.

Aussie Journal of Xanatos Scheming

Found a discarded journal today while sneaking about the fortress between disguises (Still not enough horsehair or dye to make my beard look different enough. Hoping the next round of merchants will have some) . Nothing interesting except a triple-coded line that translated out to "I wear a dress under my armor, it makes me feel like a pretty human while I work". I've left the diary, and the translated entry, in the dining hall for everyone's amusement in the hopes it might keep another tantrum spiral from occurring

Journal of Mego II, Chaos Crafter

That idiot Gizogin! He thinks he can invade my mind and get away with it? He'll see... He will pay!

Mego has begun a mysterious construction!

While looking at his journal entry, I have discovered that Gizogin cannot even apply a simple cipher correctly. The encoded message should read:

"Lw vhhpv wkdw pb dfwlrqv duh eulqjlqj rq d uhshdw ri wkh hyhqwv ri Edwwohidlohg, mxvw dv sodqqhg. Vrrq L zloo rqfh djdlq soxqjh wkh zruog lqwr gdunqhvv."

The First Tantrum Spiral of Hellcannon

Conchobar II went melancholy. Lord Reudh destroys a table.

Ledi V has been possessed! She claims a jeweler's workshop.

Gamemaster gets caught in miasma and tantrums.

Mego II went melancholy. Don't be a socialite in Hellcannon; undead muskoxen will just trample your dire purse chihuahua and the smell of death is everywhere.

Urist Imiknorris punches Karakzon and Eric Blank until both die. Creiydrek is now mayor.

Gamemaster catches a case of the melancholy. Once the fortress has calmed down, I shall commission a silver statue in her honour.

A skeletal polar bear is drinking the booze the elves left behind. Somehow.

Urist is beating random people for being criminals. With gusto.

Zeratul goes berserk. I send Urist in to kill him. Zeratul murders Grov and Darvi in their sleep. Then he punches a sleeping Dariush, who promptly starts taking Zeratul apart with her pickaxe.

Vursa goes stark raving mad. I think it's safe to say that we have a tantrum spiral. About a quarter of the fort is tantruming.

Olin goes melancholy.

Migrants! Can't let them in yet though, there's still a group of skelks loitering near the topside perimeter.

A child goes berserk. It kills Stodir and Creiydrek.

A skeletal giant bat flies over the first cavern perimeter. Dammit, that work should've been completed by now! It kills Asmel.

The berserk child finishes off Gamemaster. It then attacks Bates, who punches it in the head until it dies.

The skeletal giant bat, Bibarostar, kills Thor. Its next target, a nameless woodcutter, kills it.

I open up a small rear entrance to let the migrants in, and collect some of the corpses, weapons and armour nearby. For some reason, everyone tracks Gamemaster's blood through the snow like they're re-enacting The Thing.

Random reports about skeletal crundles startling people start appearing. The skeletal crundles themselves don't.

Strategia's Journal

I am unsure what happened.

I float through the void in blissful, carefree limbo

while my mind is fragmenting.

I try to pick up the pieces. I remember a childhood in the Mountain
home, I remember a skeletal ogre closing his jaws on my head like a vise
I remember a working fortress, loyal minions toiling in my name, I rem
ember
ember
ember
I remember learning the art of cheesemaking.

I remember me.			
I was me.			
I am me.			
Strategia.			
A name, yes. An anchor. I am Strategia.			

I observe through nonexistent, polyscient eyes, no - I brush against quanta, I feel the charge and the speed and the dreams and the colour and the wavelength and the existence of every photon. I watch with detached disinterest as skeletal elks, each and every one unique, animal not-souls still thinly tethered to their bleached white frames, fight the militia, each a strong and powerful soul, still attached to corporeal existence, the leptons who are the messengers of gods who do not exist, who control all that happens, cultural inventions and fundamental forces at the same time, passing through the shackled souls not seeing not hearing not feeling not tasting the brief, infinitely long instructions, at the same time made up of other leptons who claim to work together yet collide in their limited space unseeing unhearing unfeeling unaware of their own existence

I shake my head to clear my thoughts, a nonexistent act that shakes the very fabric of reality. I must focus. I must remain.

I watch as the militia gets slaughtered. Some loyal to me, that I can sense, some mistrustful or resentful, that I can also sense, all get killed by these creatures, no longer possessing the not-souls of the animal yet moving about with malicious purpose, dragging their hapless selves along, not realising they are dead.

I watch the skeletal ogres in the womb of the great mother, I watch my own body, I remember I can see I can feel again I remember.

I go down the last stairs, fighting with every boson of my being to go back up and return to life yet I am also deliberately seeking out the creature that I know will kill me because I do not know yet that it will kill me.

I panic and feel calm, I run and I rest, this is as it should be, this is as it happened. I die as do many others. I remain behind, ambition holding me back from moving on

the pettiness of my existence

pointless abuses

a purposeless hold on power, all for myself, that I cannot possess.

I die and the shock shatters my mind

I try to

skip this

part

my anchor

my name Strategia.

I watch as the madness lashes out and corrupts the minds and very souls of dwarves and pits corporeal against corporeal

I see the tendrils ensnaring the souls

I see the tendrils sucking them dry

I see them go through soil and stone and land and mountain and rolling hill and river valley

I see them stretch all over the world from end to end I see them

I see them reach back to

I avert my ethereal eyes

I have willed eyes into being

I have power I have control

I am dead yet still alive

I am Strategia

I am Overseer of Hellcannon

I am not bound to body

I am not reaching into supple mind to stretch the spirit I am not assuming direct control

I am me

I will endure

I will prevail

My ethereal eyes float through the fortress. I still feel every particle, every wave, as they pass through me and as I pass through them, but the eyes make it easier to make sense of the shapes. I can still see the not-souls of the undead beasts, tethered to frames as white as the snow they walk through, but it's easier to distinguish the ephemeral world of souls and the even more ephemeral world of flesh. The souls of the living do not notice me, bound as they are by corporeal existence, but the souls of the dead are aware of my eyes. They are everywhere, moving around, observing the fortunes and misfortunes of Hellcannon. Some have drifted in from elsewhere, I can feel that whatever place they came from is the same, masses of souls clinging to this existence for years, decades, centuries before moving on.

My eyes draw some notice. The souls cannot see me, but they see the eyes I have willed to exist. Most of them are uninterested, others are curious, still others panic in the fear that the eyes are some sort of forgotten abomination. I do not feel a need to communicate with them so I do not will my words into the realm of souls. It would be quite easy, actually, as I do not need to push and pull on quarks to make baryons oscillate the way I want them to. I have a few brief conversations with the dead, coercing pions so they remember what I never said, but this proves to be pointless fairly rapidly. I would say they are boring me, but I can no longer feel boredom, nor happiness when the freshly dead souls are unexpectedly reunited with friends and loved ones, nor amusement when I watch a skeletal crundle get pecked at by a rooster chick.

I cannot give up though. I cannot unmake my eyes and retreat back into the realm of particles, of organised, coherent physics and let my mind slide until I am naught but a passive observer for all eternity. I must stay here, observe Hellcannon, subtly guide the thoughts of its inhabitants. The place is leaderless, and in its current state, no-one will take control. I do not even care about the fortress anymore, in my state I am beyond caring; however, I cannot leave it to its fate. As I skulk about, watching, I can feel something. It is not an emotion, but I have no other terms to describe it.

It is dread. Pure dread. There is something watching Hellcannon from afar. Something malevolent. Something not even the souls can feel, something which only appears to exist on the same plane as myself.

And if I let my guard down too soon, all will end.

Journal of Mego II, Former Chaos Crafter

Mego II, Former Chaos Crafter, has toppled a Gizogin!

Strategia's Journal

The souls of the dead are in turmoil. They instinctively know how it feels when another soul passes over into the Other, finally done with the material world, but the sudden disappearances lately have felt.... different. They do not know what is happening. They can

only see my eyes observing it, every time, as I sit here in the plane of particles. They have no idea of what I have found here, of how the world works, of what awaits us. I now realise I have slipped through a crack in reality when I died, thus ending up here instead of where I should be. I have seen these cracks appear and grow, I have done my best to seal them as I find them. I am but one soul, however, and I am busy enough mending the fabric of the universe in Hellcannon alone.

I form up a group of neutrinos, and shear apart another soul. It would be regrettable, but it is necessary. I destroy these souls to absorb their captured tachyons, to incrementally increase my own power. The souls are in disarray. I pay them no heed. I feel I am strong enough now, at last.

I turn the focus of my attention, slowly. I remain within Hellcannon, but I observe another place entirely. I have unmade my eyes; they serve no purpose to me anymore. My attention glides across the land, through mountains, over valleys, it matters not; what matters is its destination. I note the cracks in reality have been growing uncontrollably. I see some other souls who have landed on this basic quantum plane, but they are focused on mending the gaps single-mindedly, not even caring about what is causing them.

My attention finally lands on its destination. The Plains of Ooze. I slow down and creep towards the shore. I can feel it, the overbearing dread and existential terror, the knowledge that there is something out there, something utterly depraved and malevolent. And it is watching me.

I sense a minor gravitic disturbance, a very heavy object. I expand the area of my attention, and gaze upon the monumental statement Failcannon made to the world. The giant golden curse stands defiantly as nightmares that cannot be described even by gibbering madmen swarm out in front of it, an undulating mass of bodies/not-bodies that stretches out all the way back to where they came. I can also feel the malevolence itself, seeping through reality, its tendrils taking the shape of hideously malformed creatures hell-bent on erasing everything that stands before them. Separate entities, creatures that can be killed and torn apart, yet each carrying in its heart the end of a sliver of the Entity, each part of a unified whole.

I finally do what I have been dreading to do since I died. I gaze upwards, across the shore, and look at the source of this evil. Space and time start to unravel not far outside Failcannon. Reality is not just frayed and torn, as it is elsewhere, it is barely clinging to existence, a threadbare pattern of electrons keeping It at bay. This is where it all started, where the first tiny gap in reality appeared, where the first dead soul jumped through the veil separating the spirit world from the world of flesh and took over the mind of another.

There is no more Battlefailed. There is only a gigantic mass, black as darkest night, black as the absence of light itself, an utterly evil malevolence, hard at work trying to unmake reality. I gaze upon it, knowing it can see me, every particle of my existence screaming at me to withdraw, yet I persevere. I look into the blackness, and I see. It was not created when reality

was damaged. It did not bend to the will of an evil god and her worldly servant. It is ancient, older than reality itself, drawn to consume the universe, as it has countless times before. It seduced Ura and Led, not by promises of power, but by simply bending their will to its own.

I look deeper, into the Entity's history. It shrieks, a horrifying unsound of pain and anger that cuts through everything and is heard everywhere. Countless new rifts in reality open, and more tendrils, ending in horrifying beasts, creep through. It matters not. I look into the Entity, and I see what it has consumed before. I see worlds of beasts and men, of magic and technology, I see worlds of geth and krogan, I see worlds of vampires and dragonborn, I see worlds of ewoks and klingons, I see dream realms shattered, I see cars and planes, I see crystals and synthetics, I see an endless parade of parallel realities, twisted and blackened and gone, utterly consumed until only the memories remain inside this twisted Thing that consumes all.

Finally, I give in to the impulse to withdraw. I have seen enough of the entity's true being. I feel the main attention of the Entity coming towards me, so I quickly turn my attention back to Hellcannon. I may have penetrated into the creature's core, while it itself is still relatively powerless, but its intrusions into the real world can yet harm me. Its primary avatar a twisted stonefly

it comes

doom awaits

The Entity now has a name

I will call it

Stuzang is coming

I tear apart another soul, absorbing its energy. The dead of Hellcannon are in a state of panic. They see their brethren disappearing, torn apart by an unseen force. Informing them of the necessity would be a needless distraction, especially now that time is of the essence. I can feel the Foul One creep closer to Hellcannon every day. I must be ready. It must be stopped.

I risk a gaze across the tundra, and for lack of a better phrase, our eyes lock. My focus of attention is on Stuzang, the horrific creature trailing a veil of darkness behind itself. Stuzang's immortal, ageless perception sees me, a dwarven soul, trapped in a plane between planes. It roars, a fell sound that makes trees wither and livestock miscarry for miles around. It knows what I am doing. It knows it must kill me, if it is to consume this world like so many others before it.

There is no time to lose. Stuzang flies high up into the air, and dives straight towards Hellcannon, gliding along wings of shadow, speeding up so fast it is impossible to hear it approach, until the shockwave of its passage shatters eardrums. It will be upon us momentarily. I steel myself, gathering all the power I have accumulated.

As the beast roars a second time, soundless for those ahead of it, soul-rending for those behind, I focus my entire being on one action. I propel a thin sliver of tachyons toward Stuzang.

The lance hits the fiend as soon as I begin. It passes through the gaping insectoid maw and strikes at the heart of darkness behind it. The effect is immediate. This time, it is not Stuzang that roars. This time, it is the Entity itself, the Foul One, the Ancient, the Eldritch, which lets loose a terrifying wail, striking entire cities dead upon hearing it. Hellcannon is far enough away from the existential tear that used to be Battlefailed for its populace to survive, but even the living can feel its chilling effect, and as one, the entire fortress stops for a moment and shivers.

I withdraw my lance, now formed not as a sliver shot towards the terrible beast, but as a shaft, as solid as it can be on this plane. I glide over to Stuzang's broken frame, the Entity's tendril only barely clinging to the impossible body of the giant fly. I stake it, and it dissolves around the lance's tip. The monster itself, now without a puppeteer, begins to squirm and fidget. I stake it through the heart, putting it out of its misery before reality reasserts itself and it collapses.

I glide back to Hellcannon, unmaking my spear and spreading the particles out. I shape them into a sphere, half above ground, half below, an impenetrable barrier that will protect the fortress and its surroundings. I anchor reality here, in this place. I expend all the energy I have forging a direct link between the planes, between the world of flesh and spirit and the world of particles and order.

I grow weary now. I have done what I needed to do. I have no more energy left. I can feel myself fading away, content in that I have completed my mission.... I will....

You have changed NOTHING, mortal! I am not dead! I will find a way inside your shield! And I will UNMAKE THIS WORLD!

From the soul's diary of Lord Reudh, Eccentric (deceased)

IT HURTs.. I havE hEARD IT...

I WAnt My fAmILY BaCK, pLeasE sToP the pAAAin..

From the diary of Reudh II, son of Lord Reudh-

What in the name of Ovuz Frothysucker was that? A horribly awful screech just echoed through my mind? Mother! What is wrong?

I... I chose to migrate to Shashmebzuth because I wanted to find my mother... I cannot shake the feeling that this fell screech that echoes through my head and reverberates through my very being comes from Shashmebzuth...

Find her I must, though. Be she alive or dead, I must find her, so that we may give her a burial in the name of Zefon, god of rebirth. A true burial, not one as they would give in a country outpost.

She was always a strange one, but why she decided to run off to Shashmebzuth I do not know. Honour demands that I find out what happened to her. Father is too weak with the beast sickness he contracted in the mountainhome, and my siblings lay dead on the floor of the same mountainhome, suffocated in magma in an accident.

I hope that my journey is not in vain, though my mind and body both scream 'Do not go to Shashmebzuth! Fell things are there! Abominations will rend your soul in twain!' I must find Mother.

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer

ABANDON FORTRESS! RED ALERT! THIS IS NOT A DRILL!

It turns out I was somehow following the wrong timeline (not for the first time), and the actual overseer of the fort was never gamewizardinnc, but was instead The Master. I thought I had much more time before he would take over, but now I fear for my life (again, not for the first time). Actually, I'm not sure how much he could hurt me were I to off myself quickly... Then I could just wait it out until I deem it safe enough to return to the world of the living.

TURN 4 - The Master

WTF?

Journal of the BEST FUCKING OVERSEER EVUR EVER REVE ELF:

I SHALL AVENGE MY FALLEN COMRADES, AND END THIS HELLHOLE FOREVER! But first, I have to make some dwarf cookies...delicious...

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer

BLARGH NOW I AM THE DEAD I had a wonderful plump helmet today. Food iS nice. Being able to eat it is even better. If anything were to happen to me that woUld prevent me from Being able to eat (such as my untIMely death), I doN't know whAt I wouLd do. Oh well, at least I won't have to worry about that, since I'll be retiring tomorrow. What could possibly go wrong?

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: The Master turn was... odd. So below is all he told us about it]

The Master's Turn

I opened the doors to the surface. 'Nuff said. Next time you dare assume something good is going to happen, i'm making everyone their own civilization! AHAHAHAHAHAHHA!!!!

Welp, gameover more or less. Anyone know how to kill a blob made of fire with wings? Give me ideas people, if I unpause, he'll make it up the stairs and burn everyone. Until everyone is ready for this, I shall wait.

Well, I Insta-sacrificed a quarter of the population by having everyone rush it, and everyone that helped kill it bled to death seconds later. Good news, it's gone.

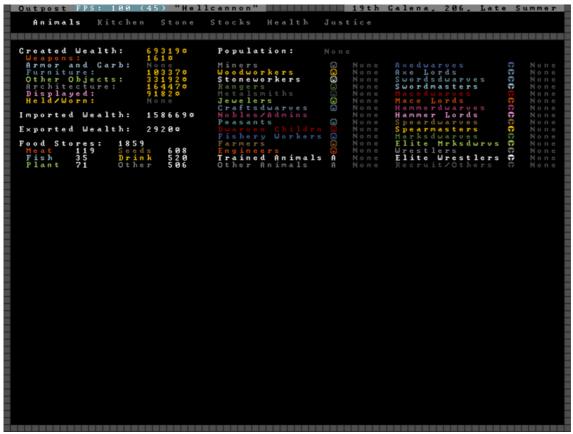
Goblin ambush to celebrate the last day of spring..

A SINGLE GOBLIN BOWMAN MADE IT INSIDE. NOW IT'S KILLING EVERYONE, EVEN AFTER RUNNING OUT OF ARROWS!!

Down to 12 dwarves. Dariush was executed. Everyone who isn't is going slowly insane. The ones that are bedridden are fine at least, happy at best. This scares me, considering the decaying corpse in the hospital where they're sleeping.

Oh, yeah...the bowgoblin...He somehow managed to kill himself...don't ask...

Gentlemen, everyone, EVERYONE IS DEAD, but there's one problem, IT DIDN'T ABANDON! IT'S TRUE, THE SAVE IS CURSED!!! THERE'S NO ONE LEFT ALIVE, I CHECKED, BUT IT'S NOT ABANDONED!



[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: As you can clearly see in the picture above there are ZERO (0) dwarfs alive. Make of that what you will.]

Migrants. That's all there is to say.

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer (deceased (again))

Um, what? Who's running this fort? I've searched the whole place, and I can't find a living dwarf anywhere. It's creepy. I think Hellcannon itself has gained sentience, and is somehow keeping itself alive. I can't help but think that my reality-bending may be partially responsible...

The Master's Turn

Migrants. That's all there is to say.

CatalystParadox's Diary

It worked! The Great Conduit is open!

The souls of the thousands of fallen now flow freely through to this place from the wreckage of Failcannon, leaving behind their pale ghostly shells. They infuse the very walls and stones of this place, they give it life. Now that it is confirmed, I can finally, safely, begin to transfer their minds, as well - etch them in the warped fabric of reality surrounding this anomaly. The fortress itself is alive.

I can sense the presence of others, disembodied and puissant, who have worked to make this possible, though they may not have known fully what they were doing. It matters not - Hellcannon is now ready. It shall be the vessel of our immortality.

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: It was at this point that the Nemesis Bug (http://www.bay12forums.com/smf/index.php?topic=34936.0) happened. And The Master failed to make a backup. The other players were not amused.]

Meanwhile...

The fort had failed and everyone with ties to destiny had died, eventually migrants arrived and the fort was brought back. The fort would prosper, but never realise the immpending doom of the Foul One.

In round two, the Foul One would be not compelled, it wouldn't even be challenged. As one who shares the Foul One's sources of power, my projection must give him the unambiguous advantage. But even so while I continue to not be one to wager, I'm reasonably sure that if I was, I wouldn't pass up the chance to lay down my cash.

Moving on. Let's pull back from this ever darkening pocket of a world. All this uncertainty is wearing thinner than the only pair of XXpigtail fiber pantsXX in a noble's wardrobe. I've never much enjoyed navigating the vortices of alternative possibility. The path which alone has my absolute mastery is the alpha timeline, a continuum I define as that which boasts exclusive rights both to my birth and to my cyclical rise and fall in power.

The Master would have given you a more reliable account, perhaps. But then, he would do many things I wouldn't. The Master would not direct the fray as a conductor with a fancy *fungiwood stick* but charge into it headlong like a madman with a goofy -featherwood stick-. He would have the sight to eschew the obvious path to victory, and find the path to destruction disguised cleverly as triumph, or even imminent success. And he would know failure doesn't matter in a reality where all else is already doomed to fail anyway. What sort of story would this be, with ThatAussieDwarf, Gizogin, and Mego made to stay cadavers? Certainly not one the alpha timeline would allow.

And not one The Master would allow either.

Journal of Mego, Chaos Crafter

I have seen the end. Hellcannon's last dwarf died, but the fortress did not crumble. Hellcannon itself has gained sentience, making it the only survivor of The Master's rule. The rips in the sky grew wider, as the demons that Queen Led summoned to destroy Failcannon came pouring through. We had no hope of surviving. So, I did the only thing I could do. I focused all of my energy on one rip, and opened it wide enough that all of the souls who died in Hellcannon could escape through it. Using what I learned from the Library, I made the rift lead to the beginning of this last spring, when The Master took control.

I felt incredibly weak as I watched the last few go through, back to a safer time. I knew I could either go through the rift, leaving it open for the demons to follow, or stay here and close it, and make one last stand for this timeline of Hellcannon. There really was no choice.

I focused all my remaining energy to slam the rift shut, after ensuring that all of my comrades made it safely through. Completely drained, I began to fade out of this world. But, then, I felt a hand, a force pulling me back in.

It was Hellcannon, bringing me into itself. I became part of the fortress, renewed with the energy to fight. I echoed my battle cry throughout the lands, as demons continued to pour in by the thousands:

COME AT ME, BROS!

The Master's Turn

Apart from it raining on the tundra, a fucking obsidian pillar with smoking merchant remains, nothing much to report, the save will be up soon.

Catalyst, disembodied psychic presence, again

Drat. Apparently the trauma of sudden sentience was a bit too much for Hellcannon, and the poor thing committed suicide by critical existence failure.

Oh well. Time to do it all over again.

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: After the save-scum due to the nemesis bug, The Master apparently named all dwarfs in the fort after him, killed traders, reduced the population to 24 and made a giant obsidian penis in front of the fortress. According to him "nothing journal worthy."]

Lord Reudh, former madwoman

...And with that my sanity has returned. What is this? I feel clearer, cleaner, more vibrant than I have felt in decades! I'm still dead, but whatever caused my insanity has gone. Was it this 'Nemesis' i hear the other souls mentioning? Was it Stuzang being Toadinated? Was it Hellcannon's abominable soul self-destructing?

Either way, I only hope I am reincarnated soon. This lucidity has not been with me for many years.

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer (I don't even know anymore...)

Yeah, this place is a wreck. I'ma go ahead and stop destabilizing things. In fact, I'll just lie low and bide my time for a while. I'll be safer that way. And significantly less likely to bring an end to reality, which can only be a plus.

Zeratul's Journal, Day 397

I have been feeling very strange as of late. Like there's a haze over my mind, and I can't think straight. Even drinking more booze doesn't help, and I can find no solace working the anvil. I worry I may be going mad... But then, this whole fortress has gone mad. So many dead, in so short a time... I can only hope I don't go hopelessly insane like the others.

Zeratul's Journal, Day 398

I fear I may be getting sick. I have such a terrible headache, like... Drums, pounding in my skull. I will hammer extra hard at the smithy today, and drink an extra ration of beer, but I fear it will not help.

Zeratul's Journal, Day 399

The drums, the drums, the never-ending drumbeat! I can hear them... The drums are coming closer... And closer... That constant drumming... The call to war...

Zeratul's Journal, Day i

The drums are getting louder, and yet... Too early. They should not be here for months to come. I don't know how I know, but I can feel it... The drums echo through the vortex...

The Master's Journal, Day -300

Grov and Darvi are dead. Here they come, Dariush. HERE COME THE DRUMS!

The Master's Journal, Day 1

There is one of me that should not. Why are there too many of me? An extra, somehow. Oh well. You can never have too much of a good thing!

Zeratul's Journal, Day?

I feel very strange. I can remember almost nothing of the past... Well, I'm not sure how long it's been, but it's all a blur. I remember something about skeletons... Horrible, horrible skeletons... And then the other dwarves started going mad... I was working the anvil, and there were... Drums? And then Dariush put her pickaxe through my chest!

...Okay, good news, I must have dreamed that. I don't have a gaping pickaxe wound in my sternum. Um. Wait a minute.

Bloody hell, I'm a woman! I need to clear my head. I'm going to go to the smithy and hammer something.

Zeratul's Journal, Day "2"

Yesterday, I left to go to the smithy and forge something to clear my head. Next thing I knew, I was sitting in the Hellcannon Pottery Barn throwing clay to make a vase. Clearly, something very strange has happened, and I am no longer the person I once was. I went to the armory to train, and discovered that all my skills have become quite rusty in what I've now learned is an entire year that I've missed. Apparently I was also dead, somehow, but then something strange happens that no one quite remembers and now I'm not.

I hate this place. I also have an inexplicable urge to either pummel The Master with a hammer, or give him a big kiss. Maybe both. Fortunately, I haven't seen him since I "woke up" yesterday.

I've decided to join the military fulltime, hone my skills to what they once were, and then when the time is right pass my knowledge on to an apprentice. The skills of a Dark Templar must never be allowed to be forgotten.

TURN 5 - DARVI

The failure starts with you

Im not sure what just happened

somehow

I don't know what happened

everybody had some sort of memory lapse

Theres this one dwarf who claims that everything was only a dream **But i dont believe hi**m

People have died

Little Remalle has bled to death from some wounds that he didnt have before Then there were migrants I dont

know If i am halucinating, but they were being folloowed by some sKELKS

the Militia set out to excort them but
most of them were slain instantly
pretty sUpid to send a bunch of newbies to handle that thr eat
we lost Zeratul G iruaNNa conhobar and Opti

Darvi is still out there

running around being chased by the skelks that man bmust be either very brave or inc

redibly foolish

Oh did I mention that

hes a man now?

whatever happened it left a lasting effect on her

or him

oh no

i can hear the beasts below

sounds like out of The depths of the ocean

this may be the last I write on these walls

i Pray that my suffering Will not laST any longEr

From the diary of Reudh II.

What is going on in Shashmebzuth!? I am right, this place is vile. Mother apparently committed suicide after a vile cheeseman called Strategia failed to defend Shashmebzuth correctly. This makes me the last able bodied dwarf in my family, which is a terrible thing. I cannot fail here.

I know the heart rending grief dwarves face when their friends and family die, so I will not seek friends. I will stay alone. If for my own sake. I will not become a hermit, but I have heard 'tantrum spirals' spoken of in hushed voices- apparently the cause is too much friendship.

Good, i was never much of a friendly dwarfling.

As I said, I will remain alone. Friendless. A lonely life but it's for the best. I have travelled too far to go back to the mountainhomes now; this... Hellcannon is my home now.

I wish my family were all still together. Perhaps when this is all over, I can go back home. Or invite them here.

Darvi's Turn

Guess I was wronG about the beasts eAting me in my sleep. as it turns out they can't even get up here. Or maybe they are waiting waIting for us to grow careless

dArVI is tsill alive too. Slime hauled him back inside while he waws sleeping on the surface

jUST in tome, because shortly afterwasrs the skeletal reindeers started lurking outside

That laughetr, oh Armok that laughetr.

Ho.

Ho.

Ho.

It gives me the creeps.

But at least were safe in here. nothing can get inside

and the only person whos incapacitated is conchobar who is sleeping in the HOpsital. Even darvi only has a few broken bones that don't hinder him too much. hes even

happy despite all this chaos. something about an epiphany and carp dem. whatever that measn.

The goblins have arived. I do not know what they were hoping to find because theres nothing here but death.

They and the reindeer started killling eachother. Mego says that we are the ones winning that fight.

But we are ont even fighting.

And now the elves have joined the fray. This is actually fun to watch.

They are dead. They are all dead. The surface is actually completely free from anything that could hurt us. I didn't actually expect it but, things have actually turned for the better. Everybody's currently outside picking up stuff, as long as the coast is clear.

Maybe I was too pessimistic. I don't know. I hope that this stays that way for as long as possible.

Journal of Gizogin, Ghostly Ghost

Ah, Hellcannon. It's good to be- wait, no, it's really not good to be back. I don't know why I returned, to be honest. I was celebrating Moonstoneween with my family in my previous home fortress, Flameblades. It was my first opportunity to do so in quite a few years, since they all died when Flameblades fell. Fortunately, with all the paranormal research I've been doing, I was able to call them up for a few days' celebration.

Anyway, I'm back now, and I must admit, Hellcannon looks slightly better than it did when I left it. Not that that's saying much, mind you.

CatalystParadox's Ramblings

I have once again found a foothold in the mindof one of the fortress' inhabitants, and begun the construction of the talismans necessary for our re-entrance into the physical realm. From the humblest =cat bone bolt= to a glorious *Reindeer Totem*, each item is inscribed with subtle markings which, though they may appear simply decorative to the untrained eye, in fact infuse the items with eldritch power.

I plucked this ritual from the mind of Led when we our souls were dragged screaming into the endless void of infinity together in the aftermath of the Faillever, thinking it may indeed be useful someday. Each talisman gradually but surely weakens the barriers seperating the physical realm and the metadimensional hell in which we are trapped. With a great deal of patience, time, and hard

work, I will be able to bridge us, all of us, the "survivors" of Failcannon, back into this new settlement of Hellcannon, where we may begin anew.

Nothing could possibly go wrong.

Journal of Mego, Chaos Crafter

What the hell, CP? I just got done yelling at Gizogin for doodling on the transdimensional veils, and now you're purposefully trying to rip them? Go take a hard look through the veil in the dining hall. You'll see what happened last time.

Darvi's Turn

And now I lost the text document I wrote all of my stuff in. Fantuckingfastic. Today is made of fail.

I don't want to rewrite everything, so here's a general overview of what happened:

- -Migrants
- -Skeletal muskoxen
- -Humans
- -Andreus being *pissed* but calming down after seeing one of Hellcannon's magnificent coffins. Seriously, coffins and slabs is what those guys are really good at.
- -Told the dwarves to make crutches, splints and buckets, but rather than managing work orders Mego made himself dinner.
- -Relocated Conchobar and Eric into new rooms because pissy nobles (well, Conchobar didn't really get relocated because he's in hospital, but you get the gist)
- -The Doctor claiming the mechanics workshop

One of the dwarves died in a cave-in today.

Which is kind of weird because there was no digging scheduled at that particular area of the mines.

They never found the body. Rumours say that molemen have begun sabotaging our mines and kidnapping our miners.

I believe something more sinister being at work here.

Mego has been behaving oddly lately.

He hasn't been talking much to other people, and spends much of his time brooding in his office.

I hope he's not planning on killing us all or something.

the master has started constructing... something.

whatever it is the militia has confiscated it.

i can only assume that it is some kind of doomsday device.

i know that this wont end good.

waht the heck is going on

they have reopned *the* sealed mineshaft why would they evne do that it got clos ed for a reason

armok forbid

one of tehm is naerby

i ca

TURN 6 – IEB

Mood: Overseer

The incident began on the 1st of Granite, like many other incidents before. By the end of the year, many were already betting that this would be known as "the short-lived and futile reign of leb Rockconstructs." She took upon the role of Overlord, casting aside her original name and going with what she claimed was "given by the god Lûk himself!"

PS: 501 (45)

Lûk, "Lûk"

Lûk is a deity of The Rack of Amusing. Lûk most often takes the form of a male dwarf and is associated with inspiration.

Modernist, was what she from there on referred to herself as, but for the fort, she was "that crazy woodcrafter broad with a log stuck up you-know-where."

And so, the mishaps of HellCannon continue, its reigns now held by a new Overlord.

1st of Granite:

Dear diary. Today I took over the lordship of HellCannon. I had a wonderful dream, you see. I would write about it, but my words could not do it justice! I'll write again soon!

Mood: Ecstatic.

2nd of Granite:

Dear diary. Today I took control as the military commander of HellCannon. We didn't have one, and I had to have SOME title, you know? I'll write again soon!

Mood: Ecstatic to the nth degree.

3rd of Granite:

Dear diary. Today I told the miners that we need to start living like dwarves. I already have plans ready for some living rooms down below! I'm getting a funny rash from all this fungi. I'll write again soon!



Mood: Ecstatic to the nth degree.

4th of Granite:

Dear diary. Today one of the alpaca starved to death. It had a funny rash. I'm concerned. I'll write again soon!

Mood: Worried.

5th of Granite:

Dear diary. Today Tholtig, our weaponsmith, went quite fey. Also, I started drawing plans for dealing with the unfortunate neverending aquifer flood problem we have in the caverns. Hope it works! I'll write again soon!

Mood: Hopeful.

6th of Granite:

DEAR LÛK IT'S KUL WATERSEDUCES THE BAD WICK! I SHOULD START RUNNING INSTEAD OF WRITING THIS THI

Mood: daklsjewiojdsaiojdapwie

7th of Granite:

Dear diary. The military dispatched Kul today. Gizogin lost her whole right hand though. Looks painful. They refuse to stay in the hospital though. Admirable, although she's supposed to be our Chief Medical Dwarf. Does she really know what she's doing? Mosus was the one to kill Kul. She's so cool.

Mood: Worried.

8th of Granite:

Dear diary. Today a skeletal cave crocodile attacked us from the hole in the wall I ordered opened in order to get rid of the flooding. No one was hurt though. Hooray!

Mood: Ecstatic.

9th of Granite:

Dear diary. Today Tholtig finished work on their masterpiece, Tashemunos Tustzalögred, a silver war hammer. I should give this to some hammerdwarf. My instinct tells me so.

TashemuFPS: 500 (49)red, "Pulledwails the Malign Swamps", a silver war ham This is a silver war hammer. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encrusted with rose quartz and encircled with bands of faint yellow diamond. This object menaces with spikes of silver and diorite. On the item is an image of five-pointed stars in goblin-cap.

Mood: Ecstatic.

8th of Slate:

Dear diary. Today we finally fixed the last leaking spot downstairs. It was easier said than done! It had more holes than my credibility as the leader, or so I heard. Also, my new room is ready! I'll write again soon!

Mood: Ecstatic to the nth degree.

10th of Slate:

Dear diary. Today, migrants arrived, despite the danger. We're getting somewhere! The dream is coming true!

Mood: Ecstatic like a god of revelry.

16th of Slate:

Dear diary. Today, Thor II went berserk. The speardwarf, Ushrir, stood no chance as they were still resting. The military is going in to clean up the mess right now.

Mood: Content.

17th of Slate:

Dear diary. Today, Urist Imiknorris killed Thor II. Also, the last of the migrants arrived today. We now have 51 people in the fort! 51!

Mood: Ecstatic.

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmedic

Ow, my hand. Or rather, the stump where my hand used to be. I was just minding my own business, when out of Nowhere (where I keep my ghost-journals), this massive beast appeared! Fortunately, I, along with some of my military companions, succeeded in putting it down, but not before it managed to tear my hand off. Thanks to my (newly discovered) extensive history of medical training, I was able to quickly stop the bleeding and stabilize the wound. Unfortunately, there's not much more I can do with it except keep it as clean as possible to avoid infection. Also, I'm totally left-handed. Always have been. Yup.

Anyway, I have to hand it to The Master, this bow he made is really something. I'm usually more of a hammer-dwarf, but the craftsdwarfship on this bow is of the highest quality. Completely unbreakable, accurate to a range of 500m, and pretty nice to look at as well. If only I had some arrows to go with it, and another hand so that I might more effectively make use of it.

Wait a minute...

Haha! I have succeeded where none have tried before! It's astounding! Revolutionary, even! I fashioned a simple mechanism to allow me to use my bow to its full effect, without sacrificing maneuverability or practicality. I simply attach it to the stump of my right wrist, and it allows me to hold and aim the bow while drawing the string with my left hand (because I'm totally left-handed, as I said. Stop doubting me. Look, if I were right-handed, how could I be writing this journal without my right hand?). Still in need or more arrows, though.

Diary of leb

26th of Felsite:

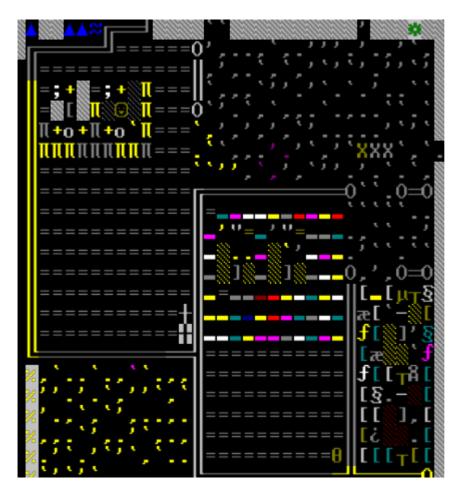
Dear diary. Today I made a fool out of myself amongst the citizens, stomping and tantruming over the situation at the flooding caverns. I must thank whoever thought it was a great idea to irrigate the cavern with fortifications in the narrow paths down there, but why did they have to start the flood in the first place, I must know.

Four dwarves so far have been pushed through one of the fortifications in our quest to try and stop the flood. Worst so far is a bruise, but the situation is unwelcome.

Mood: Annoyed.

27th of Felsite:

Dear diary. Today I received word that first of our many-to-be industrial districts has been finished. Pretty nicely done, if I must say so myself!



Mood: Ecstatic.

As summer arrived, people were genuinely surprised of the low deathcount the fort had had in the past season. Many did mention however that if the new Overlord hadn't gotten their unmentionables in a twist over the everflooding cavern, Gizogin would still have their arm and that who-was-it-again of a Soap Maker would be alive.

And as for leb, she was ecstatic, brimming with ideas. If the previous Overlords had been all about hanging onto survival, then she was all about making something great out of the fort. Which, considering it's past, was not something anyone said with a straight face, unless your name happened to be leb.

Truly, if not for her dream, even leb would have let this fort be run down like a stray mutt under a wagons wheel.

18th of Hematite:

Dear diary. Today, Eric ceased to be Mayor, replaced by armageddonCounselor by majority vote. Also, Bomrek, one of the migrants, a Miller by their trade, was assaulted and killed by a troll today while we are working on sealing the flood in the caverns.

Mood: Hopeful.

28th of Hematite:

Dear diary. Today, we finally finished work. Yes, we have defeated the never-ending flood! To come and join the party though was a great crocodile, it's stinger glistening with poison! Our soldiers met it

in combat and luckily, no one was injured. The beast was killed by our novice hammerdwarf, stormtemplar. Oh, excuse me. Stormtemplar the Second.

Diary of the spirit of stormtemplar

This fort is insane! I was dead by the time I realized I was alive! This place is a far cry from my old mighty home in horsemurdered. Shame its universe became unstable. Now I've possessed a new body and I must use my hammer to bring order to this fort, and to the cosmos around it. People DOODLING on the walls of space and time! UNACCEPTABLE! It's a shame it will take me time to regain my legendary hammer skills in this new body. Why the hell the gods made the world that way, I dunno.

Diary of leb

20th of Malachite:

Dear diary. Today, Conchobar III finally walked out of the hospital. Turns out that whoever put him up in traction last year forgot to remove him. Everyone has been diligent to take care of him though, so he hasn't complained too much. I worry once again about the medical work quality here. Conchobar checked in for a smashed finger- and toenails, you know? Well that and a missing ear. And some broken toes.

Mood: Puzzled.

26th of Malachite:

Dear diary. Today, 7 brave souls ventured to migrate to Hellcannon. Tragedy followed however, as opening the doors to let them in left two slower of the dwarves outside when the skeletal muskox stampeded the site, as well as a siege engineer. While finishing this, I think the screams are finally stopping. Worse yet, the engineer caught outside was one of the new militia recruits. I guess they just weren't cut for the job.

On better news, a vein of cassiterite has been found and almost excavated!

Mood: Ecstatic.

27th of Malachite:

Dear diary. Today the Hill Titan Umung Masnäm Zesmstum arrived. A huge hairy tiger beetle, with thick wings of stretched skin, it moves deliberately! The stinger looks poisonous too.

While at first I was gloating at our defenses that have kept even the undead at bay, someone dares to mention that the only reason it has been so so far is because of tightly locked, yet surprisingly flimsy doors.

The military is put on alert, because I have a bad feeling about this.

Mood: BRING IT

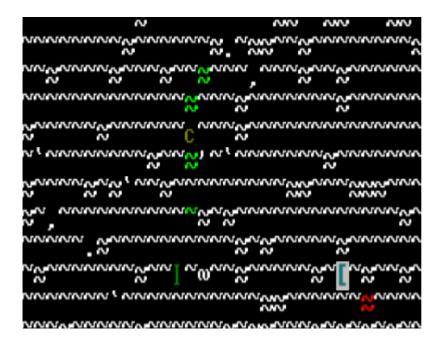
28th of Malachite:

Dear diary. Did you forget about the fact that the titan has wings? I did. We really need to build roofs on the aboveground sites.

Mood: Annoyed.

29th of Malachite:

Dear diary. Today the titan broke the doors, shattered rock flying all over the place, when it showed us dwarves once again that ancient beings and their thoughts are impossible to comprehend. The beetle is currently busy chasing after a rooster that had laid claim to the entrance, with no one admitting to owning the stupid bird.



Mood: Amused.

13th of Galena:

Dear diary. Today, skelks joined the hunt for the rooster, the human caravan arrived and Kitkun II, the child who is said to be QuietlyWatching, was taken by a mood quite fey. With the skelks much faster than the titan, the rooster was quickly crushed to paste and the titan changed it's attention to something better, rushing in, smashing a door and attacking our soldiers. In the scuffle, one of the new recruits, Etur, had their leg smashed pretty badly. A crutch may be needed, hopefully not for the rest of their life.

As for who killed the titan...

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The Hill Titan attacks The Cat but He jumps away!
The Hill Titan rushes by The Cat!
The Cat stands up.
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No one really is sure, but Mosus was the loudest to take credit for it so let's just say it was her.

Mood: Ecstatic.

17th of Galena:

Dear diary. Today, the goblins sprung from ambush near a herd of skeletal reindeer. The survivors are running away screaming now.

Mood: Ecstatic to the nth degree.

24th of Galena:

Dear diary. Today we traded a crapload of crap and crap to the traders, for some various things I saw fit. Included are three anvils, because we really need some, having only one forge operational.

Then again, there is a whole lot of iron gear from goblins around here.. even in the entrance tunnel. Oh well.

Mood: Content.

And so, before anyone knew it, it was Autumn, and they weren't dead yet. Just a few of them. None could say for sure whether leb was doing their job right, wrong, or if they were just plain lucky.

As for the Overlord herself, she kept herself busy, planning, designating, ordering people around, with a gleam in her eyes that you usually saw those taken by fey moods. But it wasn't creation that drove her, it was something else.

Everyone figured she was just plain crazy.

1st of Limestone:

Dear diary. Autumn is here! And Kitkun II finished the last finetunes of their work. They made âtridseng Led Atul, a giant rat bone throne! Quite menacing, I must say. I always knew there was something off about that kid. Way too quiet.

âtridseFPS: 435 (46) "Blossomring the Rack of Fords", a giant rat bone thro

This is a giant rat bone throne. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encrusted with prase. This object is adorned with hanging rings of giant rat bone and menaces with spikes of cassiterite. On the item is an image of a dwarf and dwarves in guineafowl leather. The dwarf is surrounded by the dwarves. On the item is an image of two full moons in wolf leather.

Also, I found out that there was no need for those anvils I bought. We have like 16 of them now. I only assumed we didn't have any, because there was only one forge set up in the magma pool. Instead, it was apparently that I just had never asked about it so no one had bothered to mention it.

Well now.

Mood: Suspicious.

2nd of Timber:

Dear diary. Today I was surprised by a group of 5 migrants, who had braved the snow storm, a herd of skeletal reindeer(that they had to beat the crap out of) and sneaking past a brawl that was going on above.

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Constitution of the Lasive of Line Tulipscribed the state of the state
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Apparently an ettin showed up, challenged a bunch of goblins and it was busy being treated as a punching bag by the goblins when the migrants last saw it. I heard that their group had 7 people though. I guess the others didn't make it.

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The Skeletal Elk kicks The Animal Dissector in the head with his left front hoof, bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing apart the brain!

The Animal Dissector has been knocked unconscious!

Rakust Tumambomrek, Animal Dissector has been struck down.

The Skeletal Reindeer Bull gores The Architect in the head with his right antler, bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing the brain!

Asmel Mengsavot, Architect has been struck down.
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Oh well. Oh right, one of the migrants? A high master armorer. PRAISE LÛK!

Mood: Ecstatic.

23rd of Timber:

Dear diary. I don't think traders will be coming this season.

Insert missing screenshot here of skeletal wildlife goring and kicking out the brains of merchants

On brighter news, today there was a report of furious banging noise on the doors leading outside. The military prepared for the worst and yanked the door open, coming face-to-face with a fisherdwarf!

It turns out that they had gotten separated from the rest of the migrant group that arrived early this month, and have been running away from skelks ever since. We could use a dwarf with fast feet like that.

Mood: Ecstatic.

With winter finally there, bringing even more chilling winds to buffet anyone foolish enough to stay aboveground, the end for leb's term as Overlord was getting closer. Things had quieted down from her earlier behavior, although many claim it was just due to the lavish statue garden she had

commissioned during Autumn.

If there was one thing that wouldn't change, it was the greed of Overlords, it seemed.

26th of Moonstone:

Dear diary. Today, a peasant was knocked into the magma pool by a fire imp. Unfortunate.

The Peasant is caught in a pool of magma! Urdim Tadrigoth, Peasant has drowned.

Mood: Ecstatic.

4th of Opal:

Dear diary, today we finally finished making proper dwarven bedrooms for everyone. Now we just need to add furniture and it'll be just perfect!



Mood: Ecstatic to the nth degree.

6th of Opal:

Dear diary. Today, Ingiz the Blacksmith was possessed by unseen forces. That is all.

Mood: Content.

19th of Opal:

Dear diary. Today Ingiz finished their work. They created Tomus Thun, a big and heavy door made of lead. I feel unnerved while watching it. I should make sure this is hidden somewhere deep in the fortress.

FPS: 500 (46)un, "The Shove of Dominions", a lead door

This is a lead door. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encrusted with faint yellow diamond, decorated with goblin-cap and encircled with bands of rope reed fiber. This object is adorned with hanging rings of black-cap.

On the item is an image of a dwarf and dwarves in lead. The dwarf is surrounded by the dwarves.

On the item is an image of a goblin and a dwarf in lapis lazuli. The dwarf is striking down the goblin.

Mood: Alert.

And just like that, a year had passed. There was no speech, no last-minute memorial building in the Overlords glory, just the everyday life of the fort. Well, save for the few parties that people had started to throw in the new dining hall.

As for leb, she passed on her duties as the Overlord without incident.

Her first act as a citizen of HellCannon was to open "Lûk's Abode" to all who wish to pray to the god, as well as hanging a piece of parchment at the front of the entrance to the temple.

On it was a call to arms for those pious and courageous enough to join the Vanguard of Lûk, led by leb the High Priestess of Luk.

Medical report

Subject: Conchobar

Admitted with several cases of subungual hematoma, fractures of the phalanges of the foot, and

severe lacerations to the side of the face, including the amputation of the ear.

Discharged: 20 Malachite 208

Doctor's notes: They laughed when I told them I was the new Chief Medical Dwarf. They said a one-armed bowdwarf with no medical training and only a vague understanding of the principles of medicine could never hope to be a doctor. Well, they're probably right, but I'm certainly not one to back down from a terrible idea. I'm going to stick to it, and become the best CMD Hellcannon has ever or will ever see. I mean, look at this medical report. Polysyllabic medical terms? That's professional, that is.

Journal of Mego, Chaos Crafter

leb has just ended her term as overseer. With nobody stepping up to rule, it is the perfect time for my plan to hatch! Its wings will spread as it soars over Hellcannon, showing the might of the fortress to the entire universe! The other dwarves here think I am a descendant of the expedition leader to this place. They do not know that he and I are one in the same. I have merely been body surfing while I wait until the time is right for my ascent to power. Nobody can stop me now. The great plans that I had for this fortress have been delayed for 6 years, all because I took a wrong turn on the way here. But now, they shall be delayed no longer.

Many of the inhabitants here have forgotten our original quest: to discover why the expedition parties sent to the ruins north of the fortress keep disappearing. I have my suspicions, and if they are true, we must not wait any longer. The threads between worlds grow thin. It is only a matter of time

before the infernal demon crosses over into our plane and corrupts the very earth we live in. But, to stop her, we will need some very special items. Items containing the same hellish power that the demon uses to destroy. There is only one source of such demonic power. We will need to capture the very essence of demons.

I am calling a meeting with my associates here, CatalystParadox and ThatAussieDwarf. They, like me, have been in disguise for 6 years, quietly observing the fortress. We will decide our next moves, and begin executing the Master Plan.

[leb's turn] Epilogue.

Lûk's Abode was a seldom visited place, even after leb had stepped down and declared it a site of worship for the god of inspiration. Maybe there just were not many devoted worshippers, she often thought to herself, or maybe the dwarves in HellCannon just did not feel that their gods were there with them, in the desolate frigid lands that they called home. And who could blame them, with the herds of skeletal creatures stalking about, their snow-covered remains shambling and charging at anything lived.

As such, it was a surprise to her when the one of the doors opened. And of all the people that could have entered, it was Tholtig. She was the weaponsmith who had created the magnificent war hammer last year, the one who leb had praised whenever she got the chance, that it was the will of Lûk to provide instructions how to create such a powerful weapon. Tholtig however, was not a worshipper of Lûk, she always had believed and even said that if a god had part in her work, it was Kadôl, the dwarven god of fire and metals. An apt connection, even leb had to admit, but she had remained adamant that it was Lûk who had helped Tholtig.

"Peculiar, isn't it?"

leb began pondering out loud, watching at the rose gold statue in front of the electrum sacrificial table, the statue a rather well done piece of art of a dwarf.

"In a temple for Lûk, there's not a single statue of Lûk himself."

It was an accurate observation, besides the rose gold statue the subject of the other statues were that of dwarves, as well as a platinum statue of a spotted wobbegong. One piece of religious art had managed to find it's way to the temple however, but even that was a dwarf prostrating to worship the god Lorbam Patterneddragon, the god of order and duty.

"Perhaps you should commission someone else to make a statue of them then?"

Tholtig rarely had spoken to leb personally, only whenever they were with a group of dwarves and even then most of the discussion was leb praising Lûk for whatever it was that was happening. Now that her reign was over however, she had stopped parading for her god and spent a lot of time in the Abode.

"No, I think this is fitting. Lûk is not a selfish god, and I think they get along well with Lorbam anyway."

For a self-appointed High Priestess, Tholtig had to note the heavy armor leb had equipped herself with. The silver war hammer on her side was a masterwork that Tholtig herself had made, not as great as the one she had created and named herself, but a formidable weapon anyway.

"I heard you're looking for recruits for this 'Vanguard of Lûk' of yours. Is that what Lûk told you to do as well?"

Suddenly and out of nowhere, leb laughed.

"You're asking me if Lûk told me to do that in a dream? You really want to know?"

As she turned around, there was a mischievous look on her face, something that Tholtig had not seen during her reign. But there was still that strange look in her eyes, like she was still under some fey mood.

"Hey Tholtig, can you keep a secret?"

The question was said in the same amused tone that she had laughed with. Tholtig did not know what to answer to the question, but it was curiousity that had brought her to the Abode. If she did not know better, leb somehow knew that it was what Lûk had told her that had made Tholtig find leb. The weaponsmith nodded silently, stories of gods meddling with the lives of dwarves and giving them instruction were something she had heard during drunken storytelling when she was a child, from soldiers to craftsmen, and now she was about to hear another story like that from leb herself.

The High Priestess looked at the doors as if she was expecting someone else to walk in on their conversation, or if she was trying to see through the doors and into the corridor as if there might be someone eavesdropping on them.

"It's a lie."

For a moment, Tholtig was not quite able to understand what she meant.

"I never had any dreams with Lûk, saw signs or heard voices."

Tholtig did not know what to say, what to think about what leb had just told her so bluntly. As such, she did not think twice before stating the obvious.

"So you lied to us?"

leb seemed quite nonchalant about the matter, shrugging off the accusation.

"You could say that. It's not like I said all the things I did just to make some profit for myself, although I have to admit, I like my new bedroom."

The High Priestess laughed again. The weaponsmith did not look pleased at all, in fact even leb could tell that she was getting angry and fast.

"We're all just doing our part here, you know? You as the weaponsmith, Urist as the Captain of the Guard and me? Well, I'm just a High Priestess now, but before that? I just did what seemed the best."

"Lying to everyone just so you could be the Overlord?"

"Claiming that you work under a god is such a powerful statement, isn't it? I don't know if anyone really believed it though, maybe they did. But you know, I did that just so people would have something, someone to believe in. This place isn't really somewhere you'd want to raise your kids at, hell, somewhere you would want to visit even if the alternative was death. But what can we do, it's

the King's will."

From there on, Tholtig only listened, angry as she was, to leb's little story of deception.

"It's not even our business really, why Battlefailed and Failcannon were destroyed, you know? I guess the King just wants to know what that old crone of a Queen was up to, sending dwarves to distant lands where they just disappeared. I would have used scouts myself rather than sending dozens of dwarves here to die, but I'm not the King. And so, here we are."

"I'd heard the rumors already when I decided to join the migrants traveling here, that if it wasn't the undead that would be the death of you it would be the goblins of Abras. But like the humans say, curiosity is a dangerous thing that kills cats. Or how did that saying go again? Anyway, this is a horrible place to live in. Our rooms were dug in soil, moss grew on furniture where it could and everyone had been hardpressed to fight the goblins with whatever we could get our hands on, and really, wooden armor from elves? That was no way for a dwarf to live."

"So I took a chance, threw Lûk's name into the air and I was the Overlord. All the plans I did, sealing the cavern flood? Nothing but good old dwarven ingenuity rather than godly guidance. I made everyone work hard so we could be dwarves again."

Tholtig finally cut in on leb's monologue.

"I could just leave and tell everyone that you lied to them."

leb did not seem to mind at all even if Tholtig really meant it, just laughing it off again.

"Maybe. But what's a little white lie in a place like this? Which do you think people would prefer to hear, that their Overlord pushed them to improve the way of life around here by orders of a god that had decided to grace them with their help and guidance, or that she lied and did everything by herself? What I tried to do was give them hope. That even in here we dwarves could do something with our own strength rather than huddle in rooms of moss and soil, wondering when the goblins would break the entrance or undead would storm in and kill us all. I'm not the one who writes history though, when my time comes I'll leave it up to whomever is left to write all about how I led dwarves through godly guidance, or how I led them thanks to a lie."

"You are a horrible person."

Ieb laughed even harder now.

"I am, aren't I? I think you've heard more than you'd like now and we both have work ahead of us. I need to go looking for some recruits for my Vanguard, you know?"

The High Priestess walked out of the room looking like she was confident that no matter what, the weaponsmith would not tell anyone what leb had told her. Tholtig stayed in the room for a while after leb had walked out, before looking at the statue of Lorbam, as if looking for guidance. She did not worship him, but she could not help but wonder what should she do in the name of order and duty.

Diary of Reudh II

I tried to stay friendless.

But there's something about the dwarves of Hellcannon that I find calming. I have friends now,

FRIENDS. I never had friends before.

I have a friend called CatalystParadox. She's uh, I forget what she does. I think she's a mechanic. She insists she's 'slightly odd' though. She's nice.

My other friend is this quiet dwarf called Kitkun II. He's famous in this fort for making a bone artifact. He's 'quietly watching'... Llke I said, there's something about the dwarves here that I can't quite put my finger on. We're all... strange in some way.

I have three other friends. I don't remember their names. I'm not so good at friendship yet. But they don't seem to mind that I don't know their names, only that I know their professions.

I'm getting pretty good at this masonry lark. It's pretty fun. This overbearing woman called leb just points her finger at the workshop, and somehow I know what she wants. Be it a door, a wall placed somewhere or coffins, I just know.

At the moment I'm attending a party. The Gem Cutter's the one hosting the party. She's nice too. I think it was her sixty-eighth birthday today.

So many unspoken women in this fort... somehow I feel I should do something about it.

TURN 7 - MEGO

I am not crazy

Meeting Log, 1 Granite 209

Upon joining the meeting, TAD and CatalystParadox were confused as to why there were only two attendees. At that point, I realized I lack a body, and that TAD was occupying my former body. Fuck you.

I grabbed the body of a miner who was just lounging around and returned to the meeting. Satisfied that all members were present and tangible, the meeting began.

The first order of business was to figure out how to trap demons so we could extract their essence and use their power to prevent the Great Demon from returning to these lands. Demons are immune to water and magma, so simply killing them is not a viable option. However, as Catalyst pointed out, the mixture of the two liquids would create stone called Obsidian, which would trap and kill the demons while keeping their bodies intact. This is why I allow him to stay around.

TAD said that he had an idea of how to trap the demons in obsidian, using a simple but effective method. He drafted up blueprints very quickly, and laid them out for us to examine. It looked promising. The strange symmetry and dichotomy in it would addle the demons, rendering them unable to find their way into the fort. They would wander around the trap endlessly, waiting for us to encase them in obsidian. I suppose, for this ingenious plan, that I will not punish him for stealing my body.

Construction will initiate as soon as we find a suitable place for the trap.

Fortress Log

1st Granite

Upon hearing of leb's last creation, a personal army made up of the followers of Lûk, I decided to join. Military experience will make the others trust me more, and this squad seems like it won't be getting into much combat. An engraver by the name of Besmar also joined.

Also, I believe I may have found the perfect place for our trap. Preparations have been started.

2nd Granite

What the hell? A fire has spontaneously erupted near the magma forges, in the metal stockpile. It must be a sign that we are about to enter into dangerous territory. This excites me. The melting of much of our lead does not, however, so I will send some dwarves to take care of this.

5th Granite

The fire has burned itself out; however, there is much blood on the floor. All of it belongs to an Ast Asheninked, but, strangely enough, I cannot find a creature with that name on the unit list. Peculiar...

18th Granite

I can feel it. The blue metal is calling out to me. We must reach it so we can lay our trap.

Mego has cancelled Write In Journal: Gone Crazy

8th Slate, 209

Mego has finished a mysterious construction!

Also some migrants one migrant stoneworker showed up. There are about 15 goblins outside. Let's see who wins.

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: Some of the next updates were made in video. To see them, search them in the thread.]

First video: About 12 migrants showed up. 11 were slaughtered by goblins, and one fled for the high ground.

Second videos: Did more construction on Project Demon Juice, ordered a slab made for the ghost that started haunting the fort during the migrant bloodbath, got pissed at Gizogin for always finding something to do that is not what I want him to do, realized I'm an idiot when it comes to building reservoirs.

From the diary of Reudh II - Stonecrafter of Hellcannon

...Wow, it's been quiet around here.

Mego's Turn

Hellcannon News: End of Spring

18th Felsite

It seems that ThatAussieDwarf left out two important layers of his blueprints. We are examining the site of the trap today to determine if the necessary changes can be made. If not, I will have him

hanged.

19th Felsite

Construction continues on my throne room. It is currently superseding the construction orders on the trap. I'm not sure if I approve. As long as both get finished in time, however, I will be happy.

23rd Felsite

Progress is being made on all projects. Images are not allowed to be made of the trap, in the interest of fortress security. However, I will gladly show off my throne room once I finish it. The rat bone throne makes a great seat. I am creating a stone stockpile on the floor below the workshops. It will give us a place to store all of our stone, plus allowing our miners to get more experience.

Other important stuff: Gloopy and Remalle have been dorfed for a while, but I didn't notice to mark them off. Deathsword and Ahrimahn have been dorfed, images incoming as soon as I can figure out why screen capture isn't working.

Journal of Mego, Chaos Crafter

...it has come to me in a dream. The enchantment which will protect Hellcannon from the forces of evil that threaten to destroy it. We must create a monument, and empower it with the enchantment. Only then will we be safe...

Deathsword's Journal

So, our fearless overseer is having us build... something. Won't tell no one what's it. Won't let us look at the bleeding schematics. I have no idea how we're going to pull it off when only he and his band of morons bootlickers advisors can see them. None of them are architects either! All I managed to find out is that it's being built in the depths, near great magma sea. He's gone stark raving mad, if you ask me. Which you didn't, since you are a journal and thus not sentient.

The Aussie Dwarf: Disguise No. 24, Entry 12

Mego's building off schematics I gave him that are half-ruined with coffee and beer, the fortress is panicking because they don't know what's going on, and I'm in a comfy advisory position managing it all.

All according to plan...

Journal of Gizogin, That Guy Who Mances Raws

Mego is annoyed with me for some reason. Claims I ruined some blueprints, or some such nonsense. As a genius in all areas worth being a genius in, I would never deface something of such merit as a set of blueprints! I would, however, *improve* any set of blueprints I felt needed improvement. Those blueprint's of Mego's were one such set. They were clearly lacking in dwarfishness, so I had to make them better. With booze!

Mego's Mystical Mishaps

Adamantine! Precious blue cotton candy! We need more of it! Miners, go dig out the adamantine from below the checkerboard! We must enter a new age of prosperity!



OH SHI-





THE TRAP ISN'T DONE YET! WE WON'T SURVIVE! EVERYBODY! RUN FOR THE SURFACE! GOBLINS ARE LESS OF A DANGER THAN CLOWNS! WE HAVE TO GET OUT! WE HAVE TO-

"Mego, are you ok?"

I woke up sharply as I fell onto the floor. There, standing above me, were CatalystParadox and Gizogin, looking confused and frightened.

"Th-th-th-the demons! Th-th-they were after us!"

Gizogin shook his head. "Relax, it was just a dream. Construction of the trap is going fine."

"NO! STOP CONSTRUCTION OF THE TRAP!"

"What?"

"It is too dangerous... We must employ an alternative method to ward off the evil. We shall create a magical **charm** in the front of the fortress, containing an enchantment that will prevent the foul Demoness from crossing over."

CatalystParadox nodded and quietly walked off, with Gizogin following shortly behind. Out of the corner of my eye, I caught a glimpse of ThatAussieDwarf hauling away a strange box. I will have to investigate this.

One of the fortress's religious leaders informed me that, in order for the enchantment to be effective, sacrifices to Armok must be made.

You gotta do what you gotta do.

Journal of Deathsword

After helping myself to a particularly strong sock-filled barrel of booze, something amazing happened: Armok Himself sent me a vision! It showed all dwarfs of the fort together, and every tenth one dying! Then some kind of magical energy rose from their corpses. I considered telling that to the Overseer, but, as stated in a previous entry, I belive him to be stark raving mad. So I went and told That Aussie Dwarf (or whatever he is called) about my vision, and he said he'd handle it from there. Meanwhile I shall begin converting members of the population to Armok's service. I think everything is going real well, even with a crazed overseer.

Journal of Mego, Chaos Crafter

I am not crazy. Crazy people think that other people have issues, and that they are normal. That's not me. I know doing everything in my power to make this fortress hard to manage in the future is evil. I'm okay with that. I call it "job security". Also <code>!!FUN!!</code>.

Some people just want to watch the world burn.

I am afraid that I am no longer fit to lead Hellcannon. My fits of madness have made the others lose their faith in me. So, I will pass down the leadership to the next in line, Mormota. For the time being, I will lurk in the shadows, observing everything, quietly and subtly advancing my plans.

TURN 8 – GIZOGIN

Curse them!

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer

27 Felsite:

It has come to my attention that Mego is not up to the task of running the fortress. I confronted him about this, and to my surprise, he agreed. Together, we have decided that I will take control of Hellcannon, to make it proud once more. In order not to upset the populace, they will not be told of the change in leadership; changing the leader after just three months would seem suspicious and odd, which would be bad. I have some grand designs for Hellcannon, and I need the confidence of its denizens if I am to succeed.

1 Hematite 209:

I have finished the preparations I need to begin my unofficial rule. Now my plans can truly take shape.

My first act will be to suspend work on the checkerboard. While I cannot deny its elegance and importance, I would prefer to have as many dwarves as possible working on my own projects. Namely, a magma pump stack to bring magma up close to the surface. Implicit in this are several other, smaller projects, such as a water reactor. I have laid out detailed plans for all of these, which Mego is now outlining to the populace. I do not like relying on Mego as my interface with the people, so I may have to come up with some explanation so that I can assume direct control.

5 Hematite 209:

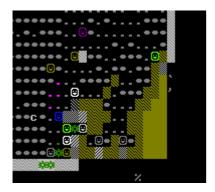
Mego has appointed me Grand Vizier, so that I can more directly control the goings-on of Hellcannon. I took a close look at the official records for the first time, and was pleasantly surprised.

We're actually doing pretty well, food- and drink-wise, so I can focus more of my energy on the project. ("the project" doesn't sound very good; I need to think up a title or something)

The only thing that worries me is the lack of miners. We only have two, which is nowhere near enough. Looking through the occupation records, I found out that almost everyone is assigned to just one or two jobs. This would be fine in a populous mountainhome, but in our small outpost it simple won't suffice. I have assigned everyone to double duty, so that we can get things done at a reasonable pace.

10 Hematite 209:

This is what I like to see!



We'll be done in no time at this rate.

On another note, I have noticed that there is a slight weakness in our main entrance. If a troll or other building destroyer were to show up, we'd have no way of keeping it out. As such, I directed a few of my miners to make some adjustments:



These doors are now safe from building destroyers, if I'm correct in my research.

19 Hematite 209:



My scouts alerted me to the sudden appearance of goblins on the surface. Apparently, they sprung out of ambush to attack some skoxen and reindeer. Whoever loses, we win, so I ordered no action taken.

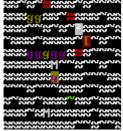
27 Hematite 209:

Armageddoncounselor, our "mayor," (a purely ceremonial position with no real administrative power) just forbade the export of crutches, for some bizarre reason. Why we'd ever sell vital medical supplies in the first place is beyond me, but as long as it keeps AC out of trouble, I'm all for it. More goblins showed up, and they're engaged in deadly combat with some skelks. The wilddeath is

putting up a fair fight, but there are just too many goblins.

30th Hematite 209:

At the end of my first month in charge of Hellcannon, here's where things stand:



Goblins are still on the surface, but they've given us no trouble.

Work on the magma pumps goes well; most of the excavation is done, and I constructed some more magma workshops to get parts made. Unfortunately, I can't find any sand or iron, which means that I can't make pump components. This is a pretty serious setback. I also ordered excavation to begin on the water reactor, which will provide limitless power for whatever contraptions I desire.

Journal of Tasrak Priest of Armok.

Inching ever closer to Hellcannon.

Why do these migrants insist on taking the long way to Hellcannon? It's not like there's much to look at. Unless you have some strange fascination with murderous skeletal wildlife.

Journal of Lord Reudh, Stonecrafter

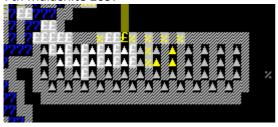
I haven't written anything since leb stepped down. I enjoyed speaking with her; we worked well together. A strange one called Mego took over the post, then citing illness had to step down. I have had a pretty uneventful time since then. Now, Gizogin, an imposing figure no doubt, has taken over. He says he can step into the very essence of the world and modify it as are his powers as a Rawmancer. I think he would be a powerful ally for me to find Mother... When all's said and done, I hope Gizogin and I will be good friends.

Journal of Gizogin, Rawman Sir

5th Malachite 209:

Despite the lack of magma-safe materials, work continues on the pump stack. Most of the shaft is dug out now, along with the tunnels for the power train. With the number of dwarves I have available, it makes much more sense to fully support each pump and provide the power through a series of gear assemblies and axles. That way, I can have several pumps being built at once.





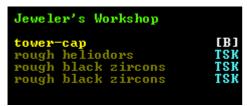
The water reactor is almost done being excavated. I ordered this side shaft dug so that it could be filled once the pumps and wheels are in place. By my calculations, it should be more than sufficient for my needs.

9th Malachite 209:

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→Kadol ïngizluslem, Planter has given birth to a boy.
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13th Malachite 209:

Asen Rakustkordam, an ordinary gem setter, just jumped up out of his bed today yelling about this divine inspiration that had apparently hit him during his sleep. Having heard of occurrences of this nature, I ordered the construction of a jeweler's workshop to see what he'd do. He ran to it, then bolted off to gather some seemingly arbitrary materials.



Doubtless he knows what he's doing, but I can't say I know what that is.

23rd Malachite 209:

Word just came to me from one of my dwarves of this strange beast that was just spotted wandering the caverns. In her words:

```
The Forgotten Beast Liceÿi has come! An enormous toad with external ribs. It has a pair of branching antennae and it has a bloated body. Beware its deadly spittle!

Press Enter to close window
```

Very odd. Fortunately, it seems unable to fly, but I'll order one of the military squads to prepare just in case. A rampaging toad-monster is the last thing I need, especially now that most of the pumps in the reactor are done.

26th Malachite 209:

Asen finished his project today.

```
FPS: 100 (47)

Ar Gigin, "The Flesh of Flying", a heliodor crown

This is a heliodor crown. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encrusted with black zircon. This object is adorned with hanging rings of black zircon. On the item is an image of a larch in heliodor.
```

I'm not sure how this is in any way beneficial, but nevermind.

Let's see, there are goblins still fighting skeletons on the surface, at least three FBs in the caverns, and 61 dwarves sandwiched in the middle. All is well.

Journal of Eric Blank, Head Stoneworker of Hellcannon

One of the other dolts left over from the last world finally decided to consider my proposal to increase the stoneworking workforce and assign more labors to everyone. The amount of work we can accomplish should increase appropriately, and I finally have the force to deal with all the mining and construction projects that we're assigned. Hopefully none of those crackpots will get the bright idea to cut back on it, either. Now, if only they would remove the stoneworkers' hauling labors so

they wouldn't have an excuse to run off for anything else, besides their legally necessary social and nutritional breaks.

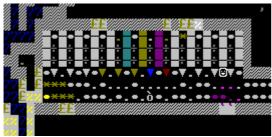
Maybe I should run for election next year? I need a break from the routine and a chance to get reaqquianted with my more supernatural powers.

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer

1st Galena 209:

Migrants arrived today, despite the danger. I don't know how many there are, but it's not that many. Unfortunately, what with the goblins and undead, I'm not going to let them in. Frankly, they should have known better than to come here.

10th Galena 209:



Construction is proceeding ahead of schedule. All of the pumps are done, as are many of the waterwheels. All that remains is to pull the lever and fill the trenches. Oh, wait, that should have read "All that remains is to PULL THE LEVER and fill the trenches." That and build the power train, which still won't serve any purpose for a while.

11th Galena 209:

Okay, so I was mistaken. It turns out there was a bit more that needed to be done to fill the reactor. The floodgate was in place to control the flow, but it wasn't connected to any water source yet. I had some miners carve a fortification through to an underground lake, and water finally started pouring in. I had the floodgate closed off before much water could get in, just so I could be sure everything will be ready. I don't think that'll be before the end of summer, though.

14th Galena 209:

Now that most of the mining and stonework is done (for the moment, anyway), The Master decided to celebrate by throwing a party. I wholeheartedly approve; a party would provide a well-needed boost to the overall morale of Hellcannon. I have been happily surprised at the mood here, actually. Despite all that we've suffered in recent years, most of the dwarves I spoke to reported their general mood as "happy or better."

15th Galena 209:

Apparently, I was a little too vocal in my support of The Master's party, because Ingiz Dedukisan just threw another one. One was fine, but I can't have everyone getting complacent. I "informed" him that this was not the best idea, and he seemed to get the message.

16th Galena 209:

Hellcannon has been pretty eventful recently. A human caravan arrived today, but, as with the migrants, it's too dangerous to let them in. No sooner had I made my decision than I was informed that goblins had jumped out and started attacking them. Clearly I did the right thing, though I do feel slightly bad about all the death on Hellcannon's door- wait a minute, that's ridiculous.

30th Galena 209:

Well, that's summer done with. After the arrival of the caravan, not much of interest happened. Everything I had set out to do this season is done, though I cannot stress enough how irked I am by the paucity of materials. Still, there's not much I can do beyond continuing to set things up and hope that something changes.

10 Limestone 209:

Everything is ready with the reactor, so I ordered the lever pulled. Water is thundering in, but the waterwheels haven't fired up yet. That's fine, I know it could take a while.

15 Limestone 209:

I noticed some oddities in the food supply. Namely, all of our food is tied up in "lavish meals," or whatever. I don't really have a problem with this, except that it makes it a little bit annoying for me to figure out how much food we have directly available. As such, and to prevent any chance of a shortage, I reactivated some of our farm plots full-time.

17 Limestone 209:

Udil Urdimonul, an armorer, gave birth to a girl today. Funny how they never give any indication beforehand about their pregnancies.

19 Limestone 209:

A woodworker came into my office today (note to self: my office is pretty bland; I need a better one) and told me that we were out of logs. Between all the axles for the power train and the spikes for the traps (oh, I should have mentioned earlier, but I'm making trap components) it really isn't all that surprising. I told him to chop down some of the trees in the caverns.

In other news, the humans finally left. Well, most of them did. Those goblins are getting bolder by the day.

21 Limestone 209:

I went down to the lower levels to check on things, and I noticed that the reactor was working.



It's not completely at full power yet, but even now it's more than enough. I did notice something else, though...

23 Limestone 209:

After doing some more checking around, my initial suspicions proved correct. The second and third caverns are still partially vulnerable. We haven't had any trouble with them yet, but I know from bitter experience that it would only take one flying beast to destroy all that I've worked towards. I ordered extension of the cavern walls, to seal us off completely. It's going to take a while, however, and I pray that nothing happens in the meantime.

25 Limestone 209:

More migrants. They can wait outside with the others.

26 Limestone 209:

I started getting reports of deaths on the surface.

```
Some migrants have arrived, despite the danger.
Kadol Stîgilmörul, Peasant cancels Drink: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.
Kadol Stîgilmörul, Peasant cancels Drink: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.
Doren Olonroldeth, Clothier has been struck down.
Monom Olinducim, Turkey Gobbler (Tame) has been struck down.
Adil Ekastoddom, Metalcrafter has been struck down.
Edëm Kosothgusil, Diagnoser has been struck down.
Kadol Stîgilmörul, Peasant cancels Drink: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.
Kadol Stîgilmörul, Peasant cancels Drink: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.
Kadol Stîgilmörul, Peasant cancels Drink: Interrupted by Skeletal Muskox.
Solon Fathtitthal, Potash Maker has been struck down.
```

It's a terrible waste of life, but I'm really not that surprised. Hopefully they'll get the message eventually, but until then they'll keep dying in droves.

6 Sandstone 209:

Reports of death from the surface seem to have finally slowed down. I don't know if it's because everyone's dead, but it's nice to finally get some peace.

10 Sandstone 209:

With my pump stack progressing so well, I decided to resume work on the checkerboard. Unfortunately, I do not know the specifics of its operation, so I can't do much other than finish digging.

26 Sandstone 209:

After an otherwise quiet month, a bit of excitement. Slime, husband of The Master, withdrew from society today and refused to talk to anyone. I believe this to be related to Asen's earlier episode, so I will watch him closely.

1 Timber 209:

Slime is just hanging out in the dining hall. I'm beginning to worry about him. It might be because we do not have the facilities to make whatever he has in mind, but I can't get any information out of him. I have ordered construction of some more workshops just in case.

3 Timber 209:

My suspicion turned out to be accurate. All Slime needed was a leatherworks, which he claimed immediately. I look forward to seeing what he'll make.



5 Timber 209:

Apparently, there are skeletal polar bears on the surface. I'm glad we have walls between us and them, because bears genuinely scare me.

12 Timber 209:

The outpost liaison arrived today with the caravan. I know we need the supplies they have, so I now have to find a way to safely let them in.

16 Timber 209:

I went up to our surface lookout to see what I might do to let the caravan in. While there, I witnessed a graphic sight:

```
The Skeletal Elk kicks The Siege Operator in the head with his left rear hoof, bruising the muscle and tearing apart the upper spine's nervous tissue through the (sheep wool hood)!

The Skeletal Elk kicks The Siege Operator in the head with his right rear hoof, bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing the brain!

Zuglar Kogansat, Siege Operator has been struck down.
```

I'm not going outside, ever. The caravan are on their own.

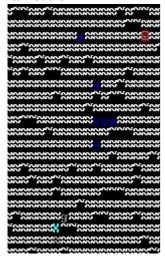
Oh, and a ghost popped up. Kogan Ledkubuk, I think.

18 Timber 209:

A goblin ambush attacked the caravan and some migrants. Then some undead wandered into the fray. There were many casualties on all sides.

19 Timber 209:

More goblins appeared, and started chasing a duck. It put up a valiant fight, until an axegoblin took its head off.



20 Timber 209:

More goblins, these attacking some undead.

22 Timber 209:

WHERE ARE ALL THESE GOBLINS COMING FROM?

```
An ambush! Curse them!

Doren eritheggut, Woodcrafter cancels Give Food: No food available.

An ambush! Curse them!

Reg Asënatham, Leatherworker has been struck down.

Olin Nudenerith, Duck (Tame) has been struck down.

The Stray Yak Calf (Tame) has been struck down.

An ambush! Curse them!

The Stray Water Buffalo Calf (Tame) has been struck down.

Imush Rigothathel, Stonecrafter has bled to death.

Uzol Kerlîgdeler, Peasant cancels Drink: Interrupted by Goblin Axeman.

The Stray Reindeer Calf (Tame) has been struck down.

The Stray Baby Llama (Tame) has been struck down.

Uzol Kerlîgdeler, Peasant has been struck down.

An ambush! Curse them!
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24 Timber 209:

Slime finally started his construction today. I had to build a loom, because he kept throwing these crude drawings of cloth at me. Anyway, he's hard at work now, and I'm curious as to what he'll build.

```
Leather Works

diorite [B]
water buffalo leather ISK
orthoclase ISK
(alpaca wool cloth) ISK
giant cave spider silk clISK
```

30 Timber 209:

Slime finished his project:



This is a water buffalo leather vest. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is decorated with alpaca wool and giant cave spider silk. On the item is an image of circles in water buffalo leather.

On the item is an image of Kulet Tourrazors the dwarf and Olngö Stolenfocus the Moble Remarkable Competition of Ruthlessness the goblin in orthoclase. Kulet Tourrazors is making a plaintive gesture. Olngö Stolenfocus the Moble Remarkable Competition of Ruthlessness is laughing. The artwork relates to the mortal wounding of the dwarf Kulet Tourrazors by the goblin Olngö Stolenfocus the Moble Remarkable Competition of Ruthlessness with a iron battle axe in Hellcannon in the early summer of 206 during The Third Attempted Abduction at Hellcannon.

It's a vest with some battle scene on it. Not very useful, but pretty to look at.

Winter 209

20 Moonstone:

```
The Ettin Osmoz Dosposokröx Etog Oka has come! A giant humanoid monster with two heads.

Press Enter to close window

The Ettin Osmoz Dosposokröx Etog Oka has come! A seem of the company of the company
```

Ettin! I've heard about these things. They're really odd.

22 Moonstone:

Well, the ettin is dead. The goblins mobbed it and tore it to shreds.

4 Obsidian:

Iden Domasidith, Butcher has been possessed! He claimed a mechanic's workshop and started gathering supplies.

14 Obsidian:



It's a very nice mechanism, that's for sure. What I'll do with it is less sure.

20 Obsidian:

```
The Forgotten Beast Osplek Uthretalá Kozi Pik has come! A towering humanoid composed of water. It has two long, hanging tails and it has a bloated body. Beware its deadly dust!

Press Enter to close window
```

A towering humanoid composed of water? Well, it can't fly, which is good, because I still haven't sealed the ceiling of the third layer, where it arrived.

25 Obsidian:



I had the magma pipe wall breached today, after the pumps came online. I regret the use of adamantine for the pumps, but I had no choice. As of now, the pumps reach up to the second cavern layer, from which it shouldn't be too hard to get to the surface.

Spring 210:

12 Granite:

A fire imp got out of the magma pipe and started terrorizing the populace. I immediately mobilized

the military, myself included, and we ran down to the forges to deal with it.

13 Granite:

The imp chased Ingiz Kedolon, a metalsmith, into the tunnel to the checkerboard. I was the first member of the miltary to reach it, and I fell on it in a rage. I'm not entirely sure what happened, but when the smoke cleared, Ingiz and I were standing over a smashed imp, Ingiz was on fire, and I had a severed leg in my mouth.

14 Granite:



There's quite a bit of fire now. Andreus, Ingiz, and two others died in the blaze. Andreus claimed a new body. I think it's his seventeenth now.

25 Slate:

Migrants, despite the danger. They're not getting in.

11 Felsite:

Reudh II Dataniklist, Stoic was taken by a fey mood and claimed a mason's workshop. The elven caravan arrived, but they're going to have to sit out in the blizzard.

13 Felsite:

Between yesterday and today, four goblin squads popped up to attack the migrants and the caravan. I was right in leaving them outside.

15 Felsite:

A Forest Titan arrived! An eyeless badger with a poisonous bite. It's attacking the goblins right now; I'm watching to see who wins.

16 Felsite:

The goblins won. Reudh started working on something.

20 Felsite:

Reudh finished working today, and came up with this:

FPS: 100 (30)

Mikstal Ber, "The Ownership of Earth", a orthoclase table

This is a orthoclase table. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is studded with copper and encircled with bands of diorite and tanzanite. This object menaces with spikes of diorite.

On the item is an image of Zaneg Wheeledfences the bride of the shadow troll in orthoclase. Zaneg Wheeledfences is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the bride of the shadow troll Zaneg Wheeledfences in The Useless Frost in the early winter of 189.

From the diary of Reudh II, Stoic

Well, I was just wandering about the fort doing my daily duties when a wondrous thought struck me. It was a table, the finest table.

A beautiful table.

I had to make it come into being. I had to. If I didn't, then I would go mad.

I think that this is what some dwarves speak of in hushed tones as 'going fey', the best possible divine inspiration a dwarf could have.

So, I kicked some dwarf out of my craftsdwarf workshop, and started gathering materials. Orthoclase, copper, diorite. Everything that marks us as DWARF.

Then, I uh... I blacked out.

I don't really remember what happened. I asked Gizogin about it, and he said that perhaps Armok had taken control of my body and briefly inspired me to make an artifact, the likes of which probably hadn't been seen before.

This table. I love this table. It took me four days, but I finished it. It's my life's work, my magnum opus.

I named it Mikstal Ber, "The Ownership of Earth". Very fitting.

So this what it feels like to be legendary... it's a curious feeling. Wondrous. Beautiful... I'm so happy right now.

Summer 210:

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer:

NOTHING OF INTEREST, MOVE ALONG.

Autumn 210

9 Limestone:

Monom Limulilul, Potter was possessed today. These "strange moods" are getting more and more frequent. He claimed a magma forge.

10 Limestone:

After grabbing a single bronze bar, Monom set to work.

14 Limestone:

Monom finished working today.

FPS: 180 (30) Kaninsél, "The Tired Gang", a bronze figurine of Os Dietwilight the Faint Shadow

This is a bronze figurine of Os Dietwilight the Faint Shadow. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality.

The item is a masterfully designed image of Os Dietwilight the Faint Shadow the moon horror in bronze by Monon Limulilul. Os Dietwilight the Faint Shadow is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the moon horror Os Dietwilight the Faint Shadow in The Useless Frost in the midsummer of 149.

It is encircled with bands of bronze.

5 Timber:

That humanoid FB I mentioned earlier? The one made of water? It's dead. Apparently, some previously-unknown marksdwarf just fired a steel bolt at it on the spur of the moment while it was walking around above the forges, and it just collapsed.

17 Timber:

The dwarven caravan arrived, and two goblin squads jumped out and attacked it.

Oh, and my greatest project nears completion:



BWAHAHAHAHAAA!

Winter 210:

Well, not much happened. Ieb made an artifact ring, but that's about it.

TURN 9 – ERIC BLANK

Outside=Bad

Journal of Erica, Demigod of !!constructs!!

Granite 1st, 211

I won the overseer elections this year, which I should be grateful for after being curb stomped by Gizogin and IIral both last year. Hopefully this will actually put me in a decent position. Gizogin for instance had me design, smooth, and engrave his own royal quarters and promptly decorate it with our most precious silver furniture, so I should be able to achieve similar feats without drawing any more attention to myself than he did. Luxury lies with nobility, I suppose.

Granite 2nd, 211

leb is pestering me about joining Lûk's Vanguard "to set a good example for the others." After going over what remains of previous overseers' notes that Gizogin somehow missed in his grand history-burning spree, which coincidentally included all the notes and labels about the control center he built, I've concluded that I'm in way over my head as it is, and having to worry about Lûk or my duties to that guard squadron are the last things I want to add. She's been trying to artificially boost the squad's members elsewhere as well, such as producing an artifact trinket that not surprisingly was largely ignored by the populace. Now if she'd made a warhammer...

I contacted Arcangelsd about the control room issue, and even though he and none of his other acquaintances can recall which lever did what, they were able to determine which ones were linked to the specialized defensive measures Gizogin installed. I've opted to simply inhibit them all for now until we actually figure this out and restore those labels. It's unclear what the rest of the levers do, if anything at this point, but we specifically acknowledge 5 defensive systems.

Granite 3rd, 211

We've come to an agreement on an agenda for this year:

- 1) We need to at least triple the size of our armed forces and ensure they receive swift and effective military training.
- 2) We must mine for tin and copper ores to produce more bronze gear for this militia
- 3) Design and complete a working trap to level the playing field for the military. If any of the previous leaders had ever wanted to make a statement it should have been "Fuck the undead and conquer the World."
- 4) We will also acquire additional adamantine rations to use in armor and weaponry.
- 5) I, arcangelsd, and possibly a few other stoneworkers and engineers will be given more appropriate dorms to reflect our importance to the survival and success of this fortress.
- 6) We need to construct additional power supplies and extend the magma pump stack to the surface as a weapons system. We can even couple it with heated aquifer water to produce what we're calling a glacial devastator for use on invaders.
- 7) Abandon whatever the heck was going on with that staggered-wall chamber with the bridges and shit. I'm not even sure what it was supposed to do, but it's certainly not killing goblins, undead, or any other nasty beasties that are plaguing this world. If someone had actually shared with me and my crew the plans, we sure as hell would have gotten it done on schedule, but no; they wanted us to consult them directly. I firmly believe it has something to do with devine powers and the legend of Aluonra, but those fools insist that's just a myth.
- 8) Reestablish my own prowess in the ethereal sense. The dreams I had since childhood weren't just dreams, but memories, and possessing this new body after being killed is proof enough for me. I've even begun to develop other strange abilities, like terrorizing people by somehow reaching out and making them excruciatingly uncomfortable.
- 9) Figure out what the hell those memories actually mean. This tundra is as intimately involved as any other location I can recall, so there's not much reason to wander off.
- 10) Ensure that the fortress and its populace are stable and in good condition before my run as overseer runs out.

Granite 6th

While beginning my first round of designations, I overheard one nobody whining that some other nobody was acting like an elf for refusing to let him butcher a pair of kittens that the second nobody had adopted. I couldn't help but chuckle. Don't think they found me very amusing...

I'm beginning to assign the less notable figures to militia squads. They still have nothing going for them, but hopefully I can jumpstart their training and gear acquisition. I'm contemplating using goblin equipment at first, replacing it with bronze, and leaving the next overseer with instructions to purchase a metric crap-ton of flux from the caravans, which I intend to order.

Reudh was complaining about being assigned double duty between all crafting labors and all Stoneworking labors, so I let him slide down to full time stoneworker with the chance to do bone carving on his break time. None of the other stoneworkers besides him and Arcangelsd are permitted to hold any labors besides mining, masonry and detailing, and architecture. Not even health-care

labors. I may have to be more lenient in the future, but anyone with stoneworking experience who wants more than a coffin to their name in this fortress will have to settle with full time mining and construction, because it's going to be a full-time job getting all this together.

The rest of the populace may well end up with military duty, including a lot of time training, so food production especially may slow, which could be dangerous. Some old bureaucrat came to me to proclaim his prowess as a warrior. He was fairly persuasive so I permitted him the chance to lead our third squad, the Strong Tongs. Legendary teacher is about all he'll be, soon. His squad I might have to keep an eye on, though, because it includes plenty of dwarves with good friends and one or two mothers with children. Disaster waiting to happen... He also has that CatalystParadox in his ranks. Not sure what to think about him, but he may not prove trustworthy in a fight.

Granite 9th

I decided to oust the mayor and claim that title as well, just so I can control what goes on a little better if I'm the one making the mandates.

From the Diary of Reudh II

Erica, our new overseer, told me that I was to go on purely stonecrafting duty. I wonder why she was so happy to let me ease my work load?

A torn scrap of paper, found in the hallway

-Entry 3,456-

After a cursory walk around the fort, it seems Mego screwed up the checkerboard design I supplied him with in a fascinating way due to a cup mark left on some of the blueprints. Poor fool doesn't even realise the design isn't mine - I just tore the pages out of my new copy of the Aussie Book of Engineering Trickery. Best four pieces of chestnut lumber and a half-pound of kitten meat I ever spent.

Oh, Kefka also went crazy and rigged up some levers rigged to mechanisms that could potentially kill the fort and Eric's going mad with power.

Excellent.

I still don't understand how they get their own disguises so good though. Maybe they get their Dwarf Costume Kits from a better brand than Arkme? They really look just like the original guys, not to mention how genuine their faked deaths look. Wonder where they're stashing the bodies.... Somebody's eventually going to notice I've just stuck the bodies of the guys I've been wandering around as under the carpets and in wardrobes in random bedrooms.

Journal of Erica, Head Stoneworker of Hellcannon

Granite 13th

Work began on schedule. It's amazing to see the entire fortress mobilize at once. I have 10 or so stoneworkers now and the new militia recruits are taking to the gear lying around the fort in heaps.

The Master on the other hand has repeatedly ran down into the chamber with the power generators, claiming he intended to clean the blood off the walls of the water cisterns, but promptly ran back out, proclaiming that it was just too dangerous to go down there. He promptly turned

around and tried again. I don't know if he's just retarded or actually insane. Perhaps he actually intends to sabotage the system...

Granite 20th

We've began mining the mineral veins around an adamantine spire near the forges. Cassiterite, Galena and tetrahedrite, as well as skimming adamantine off the edges of the spire. This should go a long ways towards providing more appropriate blades for our soldiers.

I've come up with a plan for thinning the number of invaders the troops will have to deal with. It involves aquifers, ice, more aquifers, bridges lined with traps, and a large room for the militia to train and fight in, to which all entrances to the fortress shall lead. Excavation began immediately.

Slate 5th

Migrants! There's an opening in the skoxen lines, ever so small, that may permit at least a few of them inside before we have to close the gates. I wish we could rally the militia, but that would likely be disasterous.

I'm not concerned with any of these fools running outside to grab anything off the surface: I forbid them touch anything, for fear of being fed directly to the undead hordes. Not that they'd come back alive to be punished, but I figured they needed a little reinforcement that outside=bad.

Slate 7th

I've reviewed the migrants. All but three made it inside, and one is currently still alive on the surface. We signaled him to stand ready, but try to circle around the skoxen until they were far enough from the entrance to give him a chance to get inside. His two companions had no luck defeating the undead, merely managing to damage one, so I don't expect much more from him unless he makes it inside.

I actually had to replace Gizogin as Chief Medical Dwarf today. Not because she was doing a particularly bad job (or had any patients, for that matter), but because one of the migrants was a decently experienced diagnostician and wound dresser. Gizogin wasn't quite pleased, but she's still a member of the medical staff. And somehow still ecstatic. Probably the silver lining.

I sent the guards out for a mop-up and rescue operation. Ieb's the militia commander, but her squad consists of a bunch of lunatics with zero experience whatsoever. The Guard squad performed flawlessly though, and that poor fool is inside safe and sound. And on a tight military leash, as a member of the militia.

In celebration, that Eternal Magnificent Bastard The Master, decided to throw a party. I whole-heartedly agree. Our population is now up to 70, and if all goes well may rise even higher. I don't actually remember the last time anyone made it inside the fortress alive...

8th Felsite

Work is moving at a reasonable pace. I don't think we'll finish everything on schedule, but exiting on a happy note should be trivial.

13th Felsite

Whilst working diligently, the forge operators suddenly began screaming about a snowman or something. Apparently, there's a forgotten beast in the form of a humanoid composed of snow watching them from atop the walls to the south of the magma forges. Just standing there, glaring at them. Everyone's started calling him "One," for whatever reason. The worst it's done so far is drool silk not unlike that of a spider. He's the only one we know of with access to that third cavern layer, so I gave the go-ahead to open up a path and kill it.

Once open, the troops charged, and the militia captain of the fresh migrant squad killed it with his bare hands. Impressive, considering how enormous it was and ignoring it's actual material. They all got buried in snow, and thus became rather soggy when they returned to the forge area to warm up. The only injury was that the baby carried by one of the soldiers had her foot smashed and broken. Poor thing won't stop wailing.

Anyway, the slayer of the beast was bestowed it's name and the title of Beast Slayer. My what a redundant sentence that is...

Journal of Gizogin, Rawmancer and ex-CMD

Well, I'm no longer in charge of Hellcannon. After almost two years at the helm, I decided to step down. I held an election for my successor, which Erica won. The hand-over went smoothly, and she's now in control of the fortress. I felt that it would hardly be sporting to leave her with no instructions or notes or anything, so I gave her my journal from my term. Naturally, the parts concerning the details of my traps were not included, because I need to keep something to myself. Whether it'll be a bargaining chip or a hostage situation will be determined by circumstances, but I know that being the only one with the full knowledge of how it works can only be useful.

Erica relieved me of my duties as chief medical dwarf. Apparently, there's some new immigrant with actual medical experience, or some such nonsense. I can't really say I'm surprised, though. Oh well, as long as I have my new office, nothing can ruin my mood. Not even the harsh new military training. You'd think that having only one arm would grant one at least a bit of leeway, but you'd be mistaken. I don't know if I've said before or not, but firing a bow with only one hand is *hard*.

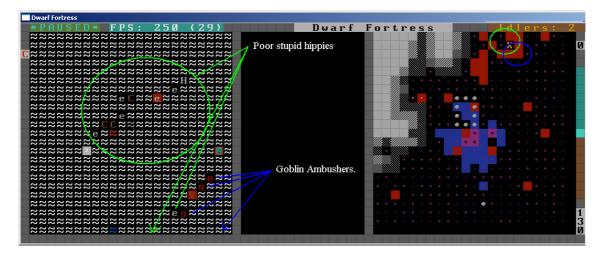
Journal of Eric, Head Stoneworker of Hellcannon Felsite 16th

I've adapted the militia's schedule to account for more intense training and a patrol route covering the entire interior of the fortress. I also designated a new panic room and made some alert protocols to get everyone in there during a crisis. I sincerely hope that in such an event, the overseer remembers that the drawbridge used to keep undesirables out must also be opened via lever before anyone can get in, and then another lever on the interior to shut the gates again. (this is mainly to keep it off-limits and ensure that it is empty and safe to use.)

I've also redesigned the trap plans after it was brought to my attention that the gear of any invaders would be impossible to recover, and goblin equipment is rather useful. The outermost section should be enough to handle any undead, while the innermost can be flood or drained as desired. It should be kept flooded when dwarves don't need to recover items from it, though.

Felsite 17th

An elven caravan showed up today and was immediately assaulted by goblins.



Rather amusing to watch them flail helplessly. They helped pinpoint 3 more ambushes.

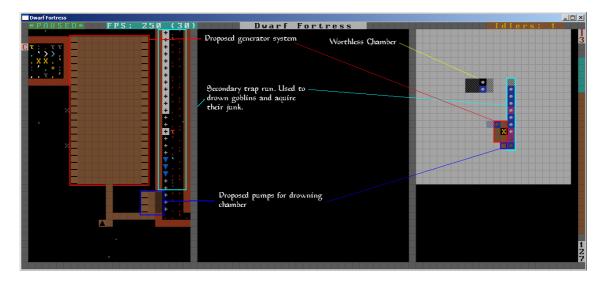
23rd Felsite

The smelters have run out of galena ore and tin bars. We still have cassiterite, though, so bronze production hasn't stopped. I'll have to order more mineral veins dug, however.

My stoneworking team is a little swamped right now with all the fresh designations. I'd say we need more on the team, but everyone else is equally tied up with both helping us construct floors and walls of various structures, and with domestic tasks. I haven't applied the new squads to a barracks yet, because the sooner the rest of this crap gets done the better.

24th Felsite

Based on information from Arcangelsd and his engineering team, I've designated a generator system closer to the surface. The aquifer here can be used to power an enormously efficient system of waterwheels, unlike the archaic design used to power the magma pump stack at the moment (which may or may not be a security threat as well with the flooded fortifications.) Once we can get a power train from this baby down to the old pump stack and begin constructing additional tiers of that stack, we will never again have want for magma, water, power, or even obsidian on the surface. A few pumps, an ocean of whatever the hell we want.



I pray to Lûk that we don't fuck this up and flood the entire fortress with magma, aquifer water, or both, or that panic chamber may end up being used prematurely...

The smelters have finally ran out of cassiterite. No more bronze for the moment, but we can certainly begin production of armor and silver weaponry for the militia. The adamantine isn't ready yet, unfortunately, so no new blades.

1st Hematite

I was making my rounds, checking in on everything when suddenly I heard a shriek of terror, turned and faced the noise and witnessed an apparition attacking one of the militia dwarves.

Udil Growlmoats, Ghostly Merchant batters Udil Abyssattics, Soldier!

The specter ripped his whole hand off and threw it against the wall!

That isn't the worst part either: after screaming right into the poor dwarf's face, it turned and came after me! I ran as fast as I could, but it chased me down and pinned me to the floor, and started screaming at me about something while shaking me violently. All I understood was that it was pissed that we hadn't opened "the chamber" yet, complaining that "you immortals" were moving too slowly and without purpose or whatever. It told me to hurry up and put the down "the monster" so the spirits could finally rest in peace.

I am so confused... I don't know if I should consider it telling me specifically that we "immortals" need to put down some sort of monster as proof that my dreams - or should I say nightmares - really were memories of a past life or not. I remember which way he was pointing when he complained about the chamber, though. Maybe I should investigate; spirits, sane or not, would at least be able to inform us about anything they find amongst the stone.

Udil seems fine, at least. Missing one hand won't end his military career. What a way to start the summer, though! That ghost will have to be dealt with.

13th Hematite

Some chucklefuck (the same one whose baby got it's foot smashed when she took it with her to battle that forgotten beast) decided to throw a party at a silver statue. I had to immediately disband the party to convince half the population to get back to work.

Within 6 hours, Stormtemplar the 2nd did the exact same thing.

17th Hematite

Apparently my interfering with parties made me incredibly unpopular incredibly quickly. A mob of angry protestors came to my door whilst I was trying to sleep and demanded I surrender the position of mayor. Understanding that being kicked in the nuts until death for a second time would royally suck, I did as they asked. They immediately rejoiced, held an emergency mayoral election, and selected Reudh II to lead them. His first order of business was to reinstate the meeting halls in the statue gardens and declare the 17th Hematite to be a day for the humiliation of crappy leaders (and they succeeded) and for mandatory celebration. I don't want a holiday in memory of my being humiliated and ousted from office any more than any other dwarf, but honestly I don't want to find out what they would have actually done to me if I hadn't listened.

Gizogin refuses to accept that I am a man, for whatever reason. He made a large effort to help humiliate me at the party. He came back recently to deliver some old notes, which are pretty useless at this point. They didn't include instructions on managing the trap network, either, so my plan to inhibit them all and pull levers at random until we figure out what does what is still on the list.

19th Hematite

I've begun some exploratory tunnels in the region pointed out by that ghost. Nothing at all yet, but the others still think we're searching for galena deposits.

Migrants also arrived. Even with the goblins outside, and closer to the entrance than the migrants, Reudh wants to get them inside, and told me to handle it while he was busy partying. I ordered all the troops stationed in the hall near the doors and made preparations to seal them anyway if the goblins get too close.

The migrants are moving faster than the goblins, and the goblins are split between them and closing on the entrance, so I hope the migrants will provide their own distraction. This is one crazy job Reudh is asking us to do, and I pray it goes exactly as he's planned.

20th Hematite

Only two of the migrants made it inside before the goblins bore down on them. Five more corpses for the overworld, I suppose. The lucky survivors will be joining the militia to help fill out squad #4. There was a huge herd of living, non-undead reindeer, though. Sight for sore eyes, that.

26th Hematite.

Today Reudh mandated the construction of three fine pewter items. He promptly fell out of favor as mayor and was replaced by Kikrost, one of the soldiers.

1st Malachite

We found something in the stone where the ghost pointed. A round chamber carved into the natural stone. That's all I can say about it for now, unfortunately.

Journal log of Engineer Arcangelsd

Today, the miners uncovered a certainly unnatural cave formation. Their descriptions evoked something... dwarfmade. So I packed my tools and went to the location marked in their (crude, for my own refined tastes, due to my years at the engineering school) maps, and, well, I must say that it looks somewhat... alien. Anyway, I'm an engineer! I check reality for facts, not my gut! Results:

- -Incredibly smooth rock: I couldn't find any imperfection to the naked eye. Must add that it doesn't look like anything dwarfmade.
- -The chamber forms a perfect circle: after precise measurings, I discovered that it fulfills the Uristhagorean theorem to the nth degree of accuracy.
- -Sound probes revealed something.. unnerving. The entire chamber VIBRATES. At the same frequency. I must do some pressure test in there...

Journal log of Engineer Arcangelsd

I must start writing down the damned dates.

Journal log of Engineer Arcangelsd

Screw the former log: I don't even know the date. I'm underground, dammit! It must have passed days after my trek to the chamber, and days after Erica simply kicked my sorry ass out of there and gave me a buttload of work to keep me occupied. She..wait, she? She has a beard, but is so girly whati'meventhinking...Whatever. It must be keeping something to itself. It gives me itches

Journal of Eric, Head Stoneworker of Hellcannon

15th Malachite

Our attention has been focused on the old room we found. Arcangelsd showed me his notes on it. Not quite accurate, to say the least. The walls aren't perfectly smooth, despite being smoothed pretty thoroughly, and for that matter the portion we can see right now doesn't appear to be perfectly round, either. Methinks he needs his vision checked... I would wager it was made by a team of stoneworkers of various skill levels working from the same blueprints, from the high variability in the quality of carving and smoothing. The air movement his strange little device was indicating has dissipated. Not sure why that is, but it acted rather like wind in that air seemed to be rushing into the chamber from our opening and out from the chamber itself, similar to the air exchange from opening the lower cavern layers far away from any natural caves. One of the workers found a scrap of cloth, which promptly deteriorated when he picked it up. Very strange. It appeared to be extremely old, but even the oldest tomes in the most expansive libraries don't crumble like that. None of us have experience dealing with older structures like this, and I don't know of anyone who deals explicitly in abandoned ruins, so we'll have to make this up as we go.

In addition, the ceiling collapsed at some point. Apparently it was dug literally right underneath a load-bearing column in the caverns. If you look directly above it in the second cavern layer, you can see the portion of the ceiling that collapsed. There are some heavy blocks sitting on top of it now propping up the rest of the overlying rock, so we're reinforcing the ceiling while we clear the debris. There appear to be eight supporting columns in the chamber itself, arranged in the cardinal directions and between them. The ceiling collapsed between these columns, crushing whatever was in the center, although it isn't clear yet whether there was anything in the center or if it was merely left open. There seems to have been a pit in the center at least, so perhaps it was a pool.

17th Malachite

While we were busy with our excavations, Strategia made some sort of sheep wool vest, and dubbed it "Sparklebroiled the Full Fangs." On it is an image of a cow ugly woman (Strategia insists it's a human woman, but it just looks like a cow to me.) in cat bone, and an image of a monster in alpaca wool. The monster is sparkling and sucking the cow's blood. The cow is being cooked alive... He calls this hideous humanoid monster a "vampire." Never heard of it before.

The smiths are running out of materials again. This time the hot items are silver bars and raw adamantine. We can't extract any more adamantine right now, but the walls of that chamber were carved into cassiterite and galena veins. So, that's silver available, and the possibility for more bronze.

20th Malachite.

We were digging out the area for the new power generators today when we stumbled upon a portion of the soil layer that was still dry. I was overjoyed and cleared all designations to make sure we could use it for routing magma to the surface, but some dumbass still managed to open up the aquifer and flood it. I'll just have it pumped out and built up to block water flow...

While setting up said pump, we found yet another dry spot in the aquifer. Hopefully this time it isn't destroyed.

24th Malachite.

One of the soldiers was throwing a tantrum in the forges and broke one of the magma smelters. He's demanding to speak to mayor Kikrost. Poor Kikrost...

Or rather, Poor Solon the Soldier! After he assaulted one of my stoneworkers, Vgray, Stormtemplar came along and beat him savagely with his artifact silver war hammer, killing him. So much for justice... Apparently he was one of the new migrants, and was pissed off because his pets were locked outside and slaughtered by the goblins. Beating up Vgray improved his mood for the remainder of his life, at least. So much for being able to say "nobody died inside the walls while I was overseer." That would have given me a little extra respect among the commoners come time to step down.

12th Galena

We've finally run out of bronze for armor. I wish it wasn't so, but the stoneworkers are stretched thin and we haven't had much chance to prospect for better ore veins.

Damnit! Nobody picked up Solon's corpse, and it's starting to stink up the central stairwell. What sort of foolery is thi- oh hey are those fish I spy in the flooded area above the cavern farms? Why yes, they are! I love cave fish! We must capture them...

18th Galena

Whilst trying to exploit the gap in the aquifer and construct a pump stack beneath it, the workers were assaulted by the forgotten beast Anan. It was soon put down, but seriously injured that same baby that the last forgotten beast did. That child, and it's mother, have terrible luck. Militia Captain Stukos Dorendodok dealt the killing blow.

A human caravan arrived at some point, and we prepared to let them in since they survived a week without goblin ambush (which implies a lack of goblins...)

24th Galena

The entire caravan made it inside alive! We intend to trade away some useless crap and send them out through the caverns.

3rd Limestone

The year is more than halfway over, and we're barely halfway done with the more important projects. It doesn't look like it's going to start speeding up, either. We won't be able to provide much protection for the dwarf caravan, and the goblins probably won't be taking another season off.

We're also out of wood for the power plant, and don't exactly have much supply beyond possibly the elves or our own caravans, if they ever make it through. The humans brought none.

5th Sandstone, mid-autumn

More migrants arrived. Since goblins don't show up before caravans, and the last caravan came goblin-free, we opened the doors and they poured in like the migratory bastards they are. The chief medical dwarf was yet again replaced with a renowned diagnoser from the mountainhomes. Practically legendary in her field. Unfortunately it's already too late in the season to scavenge from the corpses on the surface... Time fleis when nobody dies!

And apparently so do barrels. We're out of barrels. Hmm... Why the hell don't we have more stone pottery?

Journal of stormtemplar

This fortress is so out of order! I had to beat someone to death just to get him to shut up and stop beating people up. Admittedly a good whack in the limbs would have done the same, but this was more fun. DEATH TO THOSE WHO CHALLENGE THIS FORT'S ORDER. WHICH WILL PROBABLY END UP BEING EVERYTHING, INCLUDING MYSELF. I HATE THIS PLACE SO MUCH.

Journal of Eric, Head Stoneworker of Hellcannon

24th Sandstone

All hell has been breaking loose in the caverns. The human caravan tried to exit through them, wandered right into the lake that is around 5-6/7 full, and spontaneously stopped moving, staring into the abyss, like statues of flesh. A couple days ago every last merchant and animal went absolutely bonkers, some of them even assaulting the others. The guards seemed unaffected and snapped out of their trance immediately to deal with the offenders. Then, a forgotten beast, Ilu, showed up and began pummeling one of the guards. Ilu took some damage but has failed to deal any. It's poisons didn't do anything blaringly obvious either, but the guard is acting like his limbs have gone numb, and maybe a little drowsy. I regret we don't have a marksman squad to deal with the beast.

Over the last few weeks not a whole lot of important work has gotten done. The magma pump stack project is stalled simply because we can't produce magma-safe pump materials. Minerals haven't been getting mined, dorms for the stoneworkers besides the more valuable individuals were never dug, and there are still no traps for the trap hall. I never got around to pulling those levers. Maybe we can do that tomorrow...

25th Sandstone

Scratch that. I've redoubled our mineral allocation efforts instead. There's plenty of metal to be had, and plenty of smelters to be built. We extracted a cassiterite vein behind one wall of that camber.

I also went down into that chamber again and searched for more clues of it's origin. I found only a single scrap of cloth with charcoal print on it. A dwarven character obviously, but since it was just one character it really has no meaning. Luckily, I found something in the walls of the central pillar. The panels on the sides are actually carved-out, implying the pillar is hollow. I'm going to look into it later, though. We're simply too busy for any further excavation.

20th Timber

The outpost liaison was killed before reaching the fortress, so I could not request materials for next year's caravan. Rest of the merchants made it inside safely, the guards killing a few skelk. Still not a

goblin in sight. Strange, and terrifying. I need a break, though. I've been working all year... The traps are just barely getting started, and the magma pumps are still out of the question.

7th Moonstone, Early Winter

The remainder of the autumn and the last few days have been filled with obedient industry, and not a whole lot worth discussing. This morning we tried to take advantage of the elves' leftover animals on the surface, and whaddaya know; someone was assaulted by skelks. One of them killed two of the animals, a cat (profit!) and a goose (whatever...) and beat the crap out of one of the giant eagles, a female, (damnit!) but that was about all they managed to do before the militia put them down.

I finally found our danger room and assigned the squads to it. This should significantly speed up their training, assuming we've produced enough armor for them.

That damn ghostly merchant that assaulted me ripped One the Beast Slayer's leg off. She needs to be put down!

15th Moonstone

A skeletal gremlin attacked the slowly-dying human traders. Sucks to be them, don't it?

There are too many cats. We must cull the cats!

Mayor Kikrost was pissed that nobody fulfilled his mandate, so sentenced one of the soldiers to 101 days in prison. Poor fool wouldn't stand a chance, so the Axecutioner chopped him up instead. No friends, no remorse. Some other unnamed soldier made an artifact black-cap crossbow, worth 66000.

We figured out that two of the levers in the control room are attached to doors near the stairs that will flood the fortress. The one next to them was connected to a support that was rigged to collapse on top of the population's favorite statue garden. I'm not sure how that was supposed to help us during an invasion, or anything for that matter. I disabled that trap immediately this spring, however, so no casualties. It's worth just taking that lever down. The next one in line wasn't connected to anything in the first place so we just removed it this spring, and the sixth in line controls a set of bronze retracting spears in the doorway into the dorms to the East of the control room. Never even seen that one before; rather unnerving. I do believe Gizogin has been setting himself up to murder us all. Overall, we've figured out the purposes of all but 3 of the levers. Across the room from those are the new ones we installed for the drawbridge and flooding trap.

21st Opal

We had to clear up another Skelk group up top. One soldier was killed before being activated (he was the reason we chose to eliminate them) and Strategia was badly injured as the first to arrive on the scene. All that training was for nothing, apparently. He quickly recovered, though.

Four more spike traps were found outside the statue gardens. Mayor Kikrost has charged Gizogin with the attempted murder of our entire population. Looks like he won't be bothering us for a while. Rather than sentencing him to death, he has been forced to live out the rest of his days in an open hut on the surface, with no booze and only a single crop of plump helmet spawn, no building materials or pick, and only a bed as furniture. Truly a fate worse than death.

The waterwheels in the aquifer have completely failed to produce power. We're going to redirect our power acquisition efforts, but to what I cannot say. I designated a new wood stockpile explicitly for nether-cap, and restricted the other two from using nether-cap. The carpenter's shop there should be able to produce nether cap corkscrews to keep up with demand, which is less than 20.

6th Obsidian

The year is almost over, and I've yet to complete much of anything. The fortress is in good shape, but that won't last if the militia is composed of a bunch of nitwits with no gear, and we don't even have a basic trap setup to keep goblins at bay.

Urist Imiknorris and Gizogin picked a fight with some skelk. Not expecting much from them, but they're certainly defending themselves well.

7th Obsidian

Gizogin was struck down. Urist is holding his ground, mostly by being charged and knocked on his ass. He's surviving, though. Etur? Not so much. She just entered the fight, pulling just one skelk away from Urist, and isn't looking too good. Amost arrived and saved Urist from an eternity of bruised buttocks, and the broker Mosus just barely prevented Etur from being struck down, taking some bruises herself. Etur suffocated shortly thereafter. We're going to recover the gear she and Gizogin were wearing and call it a winter. On the 28th of Obsidian I will seal the doors.

12th Obsidian

There was a pedestal inside that pillar, but nothing on it to even suggest what could have been on it.

19th Obsidian

The militia was on Skelk duty for some stupid civie, and finally put down the last of that herd. Within an hour, more elk appeared on the horizon. Living, breathing elk. The Evil of this region has been slowly slipping away, I can feel it. None of the other dwarves agree with me, but I definitely feel better. Like some immense, malodorous cloud has finally parted, and life is beginning to conquer the wastes. Now if only the ghosts of the dead would stop bothe- Oh wait I'm undead. Hah! Almost told myself to lay down and die.

That stupid woman that's always getting into trouble brought her children into the danger room with her and both suffered some injuries.

24th Obsidian

The old wounds are beginning to bother me. They've been infected for some time, but I've been able to keep it under control until recently. The doctors won't have a look at them, though.

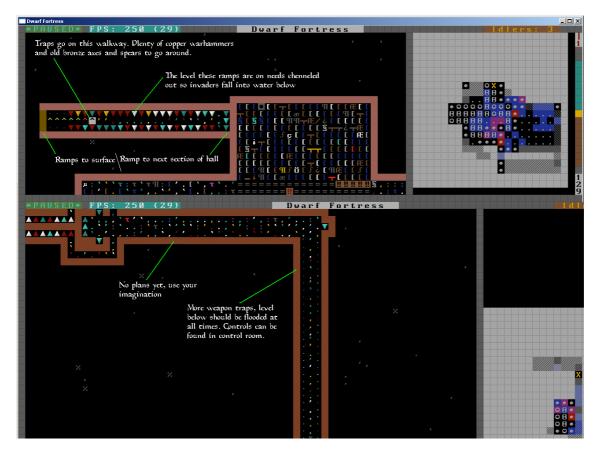
With nothing better to do with the last few days of the year, I've instructed the stoneworkers to start smoothing the walls of the fortress. The woodsdorfs are bringing in more nether cap, and the forges are producing more nickel pipes, but we still can't afford to build the pumps yet. I'm gonna take a break and write up my final report for the next overseer. And avoid burning anything, unlike the last few.

Overseer's Notes

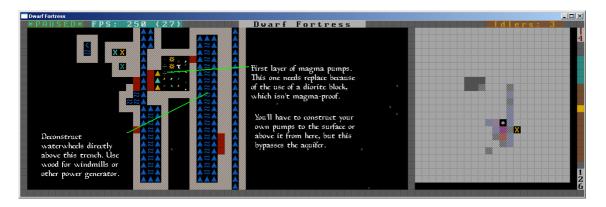
Eric, Head Stoneworker of Hellcannon

First of all, congratulations on winning the elections, and have no fear; you aren't inheriting any particularly difficult duties. The overseer's job is simply to assist the mayor and other nobles in running the day-to-day aspects of the fortress and carry out their orders. Considering the majority of nobles don't really DO anything, your schedule should be almost entirely of your own design. However, I have to leave you with some notices of jobs to be completed from my own agenda, all of which we can afford to have postponed for some time.

First on the list, and the only one that will be necessary to complete with haste, is completing the trap hallway. You may wish to postpone opening it to the surface, though...



Next on the list is the magma pump stack. It's fairly confusing, but all of the components above the second caverns have their place. Once you build all of these pumps and the ones in the caverns, you'll have a functioning magma pump stack. Nether cap corkscrews and nickel pipes are being manufactured currently, and by mid-spring there should enough of a supply to complete the project. I've left notes at the locations of components. If you're not completely incompetent, that should be enough, but feel free to ask me, Arcangelsd (our Head Engineer), or any of the other stoneworkers or mechanics involved, as they have their orders.



For items of least concern, we have:

- 1) Ensuring all the soldiers are geared up with at least bronze equipment, including silver blunt weapons and adamantine blades. Quality wasn't important in manufacture...
- 2) Ensuring the soldiers are training in the danger rooms
- 3) Definitely need a full-time hospital.
- 4) Obtaining more minerals. Specifically need cassiterite and tetrahedrite for bronze, and galena for silver. Garnierite can be used for nickel pipes and eventually furniture and the lead from galena can be used for basic metal crafts. Adamantine would be nice, but is in extremely short supply.
- 5) Require a prison.

Now, I've been in poor health and would prefer to retire to basic materials production. The more prominent stoneworkers have gotten elaborate rooms, complete with workshops, on level 116. I anticipate that you will make good use of the labor forces available to you, and appreciate that they are vastly more competent that they were at the beginning of my term. Good luck, and may the stones flee in terror from your pick!

TURN 10 - DARIUSH

One quadrupedal piece of shit

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: No traditional in-character journals for this turn.]

Aaaand my first month has passed! Highlights:

- A horde of migrants (mostly got slaughtered by skeletal muskoxen);
- Crusher construction began;
- Magma pumpstack plans laid out;
- Plans to make a decent military instead of the fuckshitting mess we have now

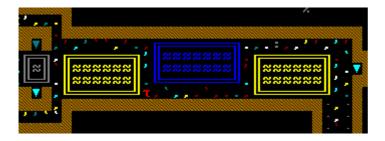
Urist Imiknorris died from thirst. While in panic room. Which was sealed despite me not giving orders to seal it.

head asplode

-Journal Entry 35x7x-

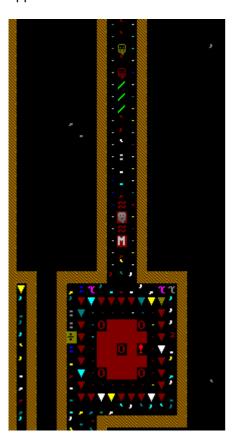
They think I killed Urist Imiknorris. They're half-right. I was just about to do him in when the poor fool tripped into the panic room and hit the lever that sealed it. I'm not gonna complain though.

Dariush's Turn



Can you guess what could this possibly be?!

In other news, the magma is pumped to the level right below the surface. Brainstorming for applications time!



In the northern corner: a horde of migrants on a bridge. In the southern corner: a berserk camel in the totally inaccessible trade depot. Migrants can't pass the camel, soldiers can't access the depot to kill it. Add Yakety Sax and get the awesomest chase scene ever. What should I do? :(

```
The Stray Cow Calf (Tame) has been crushed by a drawbridge.
Asob Kuletidos, Woodcutter cancels Store Item in Bin: Item inaccessi
Sibrek Uzolneth, Soldier cancels Store Item in Bin: Item inaccessibl
Ber Säkzulkatthir, Weaponsmith cancels Store Item in Bin: Item
inaccessible.
Zulban Matustuth, Soldier cancels Store Item in Bin: Item inaccessib
'Steve' Avuzkûbuk, Aussie Dwarf Do has been struck down.
'Reudh II' Dataniklist, Stoic has calmed down.
'CatalystParadox' Kolgasol, Slightly Odd has calmed down.
'Gloopy' Ibruklikot, Dungeonsmith has been crushed by a drawbridge.
```



Okay, who the FUCK thought that building this plot riiiight there was a good idea?! Actually, I know it's you, Aussie. You deserved death, mwaha.

```
Moldath Lüritstinthäd, Soldier cancels Rest: Went insane.
Moldath Lüritstinthäd, Soldier has gone berserk!
`Ieb' Idaban, High Priestess of Luk has been struck down.
```

That bro got in hospital for having a broken *toe*. He became starving and dehydrated, then picked his sorry ass off the bed and OHK'd leb.

```
The Soldier stabs The High Priestess of Luk in the head with his *adamantine spear*, tearing the muscle, shattering the skull and tearing the brain through the X(cave spider silk hood)X! A tendon in the skull has been torn! The *adamantine spear* has lodged firmly in the wound! 'Ieb' Idaban, High Priestess of Luk has been struck down.
```

That's the entire fight log. Seriously.

For the second time in two months our entire fortress is deadlocked due to a berserk.



This time *the entire* population of the fortress is huddled there. The berserk is unconcious and separated from the rest by a pit, but nobody seems to care. Oh, and there's a siege going. Fucking clusterfuck.

```
The Soldier hacks The Cheese Prophet in the upper body with his tadamantine battle axet, tearing apart the muscle and shattering the left false rib through the XX(pig tail fiber cloak)XX! An artery has been opened by the attack! A tendon in the left false rib has been torn! The Cheese Prophet stands up.

The Cheese Prophet gives in to pain.

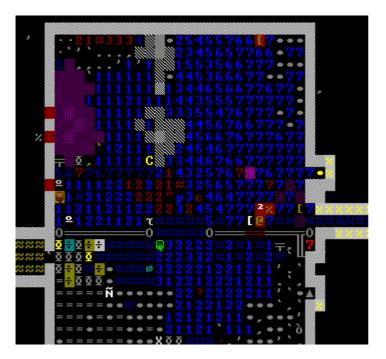
The Cheese Prophet falls over.

The Cheese Prophet loses hold of the XX(giant cave spider silk hood)XX.

The Soldier hacks The Cheese Prophet in the head with his tadamantine battle axet and the severed part sails off in an arc!

'Strategia II' Ulingmörul, Cheese Prophet has been struck down.
```

Strategia threw a tantrum and promptly got OHKed by a random loyalist. In other news, the berserk died from thirst.





Oops.

Reudh and Newbuckle died and apparently there's an FB rampaging through the fortress. Which is still being flooded.

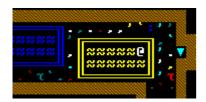
A couple of children drowned and FB killed several soldiers. One of whom happened to be me. Oh, and did I mention that at any given moment there are at least several tantrums going on? Or that the main (and only) stairway is still being fucking flooded?!



It would be pretty hilarious if WHAT remains the last living dwarf in the fortress.

```
One' Athelkastar, Beast Slayer cancels Pickup Equipment: Interrupted by Goblin Master Lasher.
'One' Athelkastar, Beast Slayer has been crushed by a drawbridge.
```

Protip: don't wander outside (where everything is forbidden) across the fucking Crusher in the middle of a fucking siege.



Three guesses what is about to happen?

The Crusher officially enters 'tested' status. Results of the testing:

- an unholy fuckload of goblins, trolls and shit OBLITERATED;
- two trolls got through by managing to be in the gaps between bridges when they swung, the lucky bastards;
- one CRETIN OBLITERATED;

Recommended improvements:

- add moar bridges;
- somehow use magma;

Okay, I'm finishing up. The population seems to have stablized at 47. Surviving named dwarves: Eric, Mego, Ahrimahn, Tasrak, Dariush, Andreus, stormtemplar, Slime, CatalystParadox, Kitkun, Remalle. Everyone else has to be redorfed. There's apparently a siege going on, but I haven't seen any enemies for a loooong time. I added a LOT of new levers (though everything is signed;)). Currently the entrance is open and the Crusher is going. Once the big cavern is filled with water to a respectable depth (5/7-7/7), someone should turn off the drain using a lever in the lever room and build a well in the corner of the hospital through which the water is draining. Despite the guardtower having stairs on the roof, it is completely secure, since those stairs lead into walls.

Journal of Eric, Head Stoneworker of Hellcannon

Arcangelsd and Reudh II were both slaughtered in the recent catastrophes. Without a gaggle of other professional mechanics and masons in my stoneworking team I'm essentially crippled, having to direct every little detail of work and go over every single blueprint myself. I explicitly stated in my notes to the next overseer to postpone opening the trap halls to the surface, but the fool didn't listen, and look where it got us! We're doomed.

Reudh's Rambling

And with a crash I was gone. What had happened? I was talking to Arcangelsd and then now I'm here?

Where are my hands? I can't see them...

...They're seethrough? Oh, I swear, if someone's spiked my plump helmet wine again... I'll...

Wait, Arcangelsd's seethrough as well? This is one heck of a trip...

But if Arcangelsd is seethrough, shouldn't Erica be seethrough too?

What's going on...? I'm... frightened. I wasn't even frightened when that eldritch beast rampaged through the mountainhome... but something about this situation is just wrong.

And there's a whole lot of new dwarves too! These guys are seethrough as well... What...? Some I have never seen before. A long line of somber looking dwarves, all named Gizogin told me that I could do some thing with the fabric of reality, like graffiti? Apparently I died, and Arcangelsd and I are now ghosts... Which is weird, I have retained my consciousness and proprioception, but I can't seem to interact with Erica that well. Where's Ieb? I liked Ieb. She was nice. She always had a use for the stoneworkers.

But now here I am, and you're hearing this.

You will all hear this.

DWARVES OF HELLCANNON, REMEMBER THE MASONS. REMEMBER THE MASONS. WITHOUT THEM, YOU WOULD BE DEAD.

Arcangelsd's Ramblings

Reudh? REUDH?

Why are you freaking out all of a sudden?

That awful beast just passed by without harming us!

Is'allright!

Wait

Wait. I feel weird. Empty. Detached.

Why was all that fuss again?

I don't even...

Reudh, have you realized that you are translucent? Did you broke physics again?

TRANSLUCEN

NOONONONNO that was not supposed to happen. I had great plans for the future I CANNOT BE DEAD

What are you saying, quadruple Gizogin? -What the hell I'm seeing why there are an areseload of dead Gizogins there-

Fabrics of reality...huh, you mean like atoms? I'm a !!Nuclear!! scientist, y'all of you know.

Ok, ok. I calm down now. Thanks for the rant, dude...s?

LET'S SEE HOW I CAN TAKE AN ADVANTAGE OF THIS SITUATION MWAHAHAHAHA

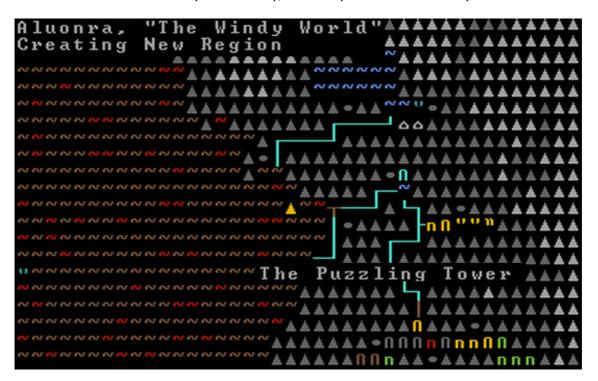
Wait. I'm not evil. At least not TOO evil. I think that just not letting the power get on top of my head and wait...for my old friend to tweak me into reality again will suffice. Ah, friends, that's why you want to have some watching your back! Apart from knives of course. I hate knives.

I'm ranting again. Armok be blessed, I'm annoying even while dead!. All the souls are looking at me. better to shut up. Now.

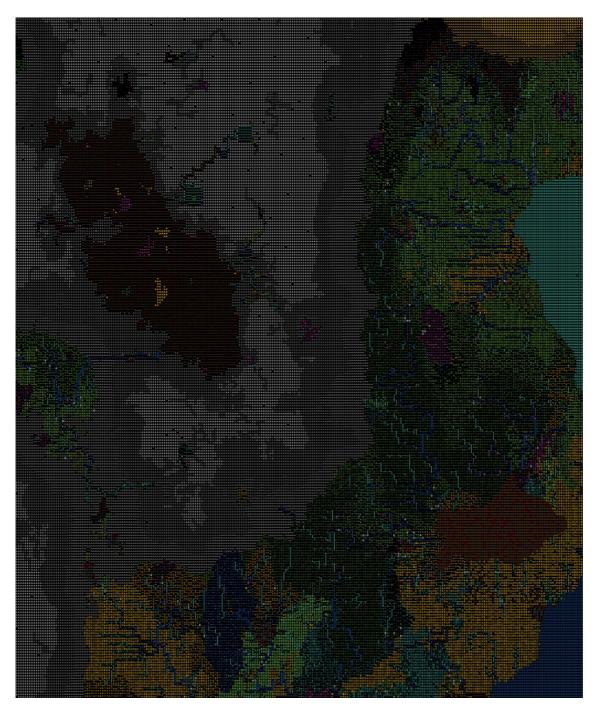
Meanwhile...



Two centuries after the Cataclysm of Failday, a new day dawns on the Windy World...



Few near the blast had survived when the walls between the worlds had fell to ruin. Placed in a position of crisis beyond apathy, the gods were forced into action. In an instant of divine force of will, the gods moved the mountains themselves to destroy the fortresses of Failcannon and Battlefailed forever, sealing their inhabitants in the dark realm of Xemorid upon the Blueness of Malodors, the infernal ocean now bound by impenetrable masses of rock.



The devastation was complete. Graspedseduce and the entirety of the Sword of Boots were wiped out in the shifting of earth and sea. Not a soul survived the resealing of the world that could witness it occur: a hemisphere sacrificed to save existence. But at such cost, what existence would be bought.

The Rules had been broken. The mortal realms, once free of the whims and tyrannies of the gods, would now stand thick in their struggle for power. Already, Ura's servants proliferated through the cosmos, and the minions of the Foul One, that eternal Night, infested every dusk of countless worlds.

But the other gods were stirring their armies. The first battle of the war would be here where it all began, in Aluonra.

An old shadow hovers the rising sun, cast by a vengeful moon holding the sky in eclipse.

Lich Queen pyromancer

You are surrounded by incessant cackling.

CatalystParadox's Ramblings

starts awake

Huh, wha?

Where am I? What was that earth-shaking noise that sounded an awful lot like divine wrath?

How did that world-spanning mountain range get there? Why am I not inside the fort anymore?

And... most of all... why am I floating around inside an ancient evil Lich Queen instead of the other way around!?! D:

Ohhh dear. This is going to be Fun.

TURN 11 – LORD SLOWPOKE

El Presidente

Current date's 22th of Granite, 213. I've been granted the save during mid-autumn I believe, so I think I'll just go on and take it to another mid-autumn.

So, what can I say? The *ogre*. not a troll, that is now a resident of the magma sea, has died, reanimated, and is still on fire. I have claimed him as my mascot until further notice. The siege consisting of one goblin unable to control a giant bat decided to call it quits, there's an aquifer leaking into the caverns horribly mangling the FPS resulting in yours truly mangling the internal workings of our lovely, pointless, and unfinished doomsday device to deal with, quite surprisingly nobody died yet, a soldier by the name of Feb Fathor made a fancy prase bed, and I've taken notice that some poor sod before me ran out of designated burial space. So there's this heap of corpses lying about in the middle of the main stairway, with the usual dwarf stealing a shoe or shirt once in a while, on the way to pick up the next statue or what will you.

I'm also expanding a room located very close to the barracks and a bunch of bedrooms, via the means of adding more instances of it's only redeeming feature. Would just cave in the entire thing and start anew, but I'm not willing to mangle the cannon even more.

```
The Soldier hacks The El Presidente in the head with his adamantine battle axe, tearing apart the muscle, shattering the skull and tearin apart the brain through the x(leopard leather hood)x! An artery has been opened by the attack! A tendon in the skull has been torn! The adamantine battle axe has lodged firmly in the wound! 'Kar Puwuncobi' Etostoddom, El Presidente has been struck down. The El Presidente regains consciousness. The El Presidente is no longer stunned.
```

Of all the things I've seen, Hellcannon is the first to deliver me a named dwarf who flipped off death without changing bodies in the process.

And pathfinding in the now-mined out candy tubes seems a little bit broken.

In the less unusual news, we had two-squad goblin ambush combined with elf caravan. The elves beat a full squad before I've decided they're good enough to warrant a rescue by the military. We've got another artifact, this time a cat bone throne, encrusted with orthoclase and granite, encircled with bands of gabbro. On the item is an image of fisher berries in cat bone. On the item is an image of thick crescents in cat leather. And I'm building a small necropoli for all the various corpses just lying about everywhere in the vicinity of the fortress. Too soon to speak of the progress on the cannon, since most of the workforce was directed to said necropoli, surprisingly not literally (only Andreus and an irrevelant child managed to die by now). If there's something specific I should redorf Andreus as, make sure to tell me. That's it for now.

```
Kib Atulducim, Soldier has calmed down.

'Kar Puwuncobi' Etostoddom, The Immortal Presidente has suffocated.x2

'Kar Puwuncobi' Etostoddom, The Immortal Presidente has suffocated.x3

'Kar Puwuncobi' Etostoddom, The Immortal Presidente has suffocated.

'Kar Puwuncobi' Etostoddom, The Immortal Presidente has suffocated.
```

And that's said dwarf suffocating three times in one day, then two times, then once daily. And I've noticed that every time the dorf dies, there's just a corpse spawned under him, with none of the former's items on it. Room ownership's revoked, sure, so are the things in the nobles tab, but relations, skills and such remain the same. I may revert the save before it turns into a full-on CTD or just watch what unfolds then revert, haven't decided yet.

Sixth death, and I can't find the corpse when I try zooming in to the "x has suffocated" message. The spam seems to have stopped, too. Well, this was fun while it lasted, better not cause a Nemesis or whatever later on.

→`Mego' Shemsåkzul, Chaos Crafter has suffocated.

Will you people stop suffocating *goddamn*

Not much of date! Several skelk incursions causing quite a major problem in the surface cleanup process, which I don't think I'll manage to pull off until the end of my turn. Thankfully, our increasingly legendary seven dwarves worth of a militia can handle everything from skelk to the forgotten beast which recently appeared and started wrecking the unprotected DWR. Tips on deactivating a mangled reactor with the pumps still running would be appreciated. So far I've tried to connect it via gear assembly to the main stack, since it draws more than the reactor currently produces, to no avail - everything's getting submerged. And the human caravan arrived just now, with no ambush behind it I presume, already unloading at the depot. Oh, and I brought some screencaps:

```
'Eric II' Kilruduvel, Head StoneworkerNo Job

'Mego U' Sanrebäs, Chaos Crafter
'I' Borushkivish, Stoneworker Construct rock Coffin/R

'Kar Puwuncobi Mil' Kuletidos, El Presidentetem in Stockpile

'Tasrak' Emenkol, Priest of Armok
Ahrimahn' Olonstorlut, Stoneworker
Olon Biseklogem, Soldier
Ber Säkzulkatthir, Engraver
'Andreus WUII' Shaligrighth, The Immortalge large, serrated copper disc/R
'Halbezbin Somegret' Atirarkim, Weaponsmitheak
Zulban Matustuth, Soldier
'Embul Likotathel, Soldier
Sembul Likotathel, Soldier
Stinthäd Bimked, Soldier
Store Item in Stockpile
Construct Building
Construct Building
Construct Building
Construct Building

Kadol Tangathnörul, Mechanic
Tulon Eralonol, Soldier
```

First things first, here's the unit list. We've got a total of 38 dwarves now, so it all fit nicely in two pages. If you're not here, feel free to assume you're dead or weren't dorfed yet - claim your dwarf today!

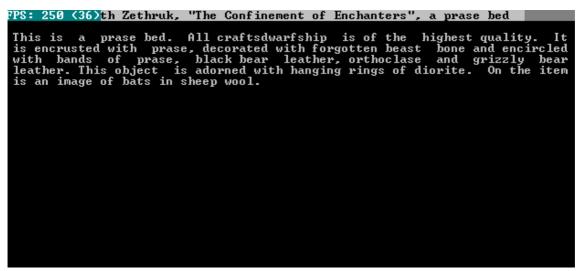
Do note however, after taking this picture I turned Zulban Matustuth into Terrahex. And I'm not even joking with the numeral on El Presidente. Hell, stuff went so bad that after he died the 41th time *he disappeared from the unit list whatsoever*. Only remains as of now are four corpses put in a forbidden memorial room, the rest I atomsmashed in case it'd cause a horrible mess later.



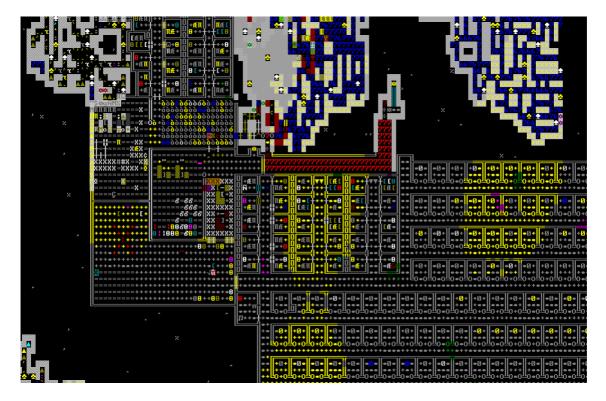
So here's another fancy thing that happened! While in progress of the cleanup of the surface, I thought it'd be wise to take all the metal crap up there, and melt it instead of atomsmashing to make up for the examples of utterly useless use of our precious metal supplies. I can only guess that I managed to select a barrel to be melted, and the wine was carefully removed from the barrel and placed next to it before the former was going into the magma using dwarven psionics, causing it to become solid. Oh well, best not delve on this too much, else I'd be trying to ram Kobold's Quest-esque portals into the plot with a hammer.

```
PS: 250 (28) sokangrurast, "The Leafy Yor-Guises", a cat bone throne

This is a cat bone throne. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encrusted with orthoclase and granite and encircled with bands of gabbro. On the item is an image of fisher berries in cat bone. On the item is an image of thick crescents in cat leather.
```



Pictured here are the artifacts, as I claimed to deliver pictures of them. Not much, but at least they're usable.



And here's the part I like the most! Pictured: Hall of Spite (you can guess where it is, can you); north of it bedrooms, directly west the Repeater (I believe it's broken because I obsidianized it's water input while plugging the floodgate. Sorry, deleted all the notes when setting up the HoS, so I couldn't just lever the thing.) southwest of it barracks, southeast of it Dead Dwarf Storage V2: Corpse Boogaloo. Oh, and everything is smoothed. I shifted just about everyone to stone detailing for a while, so it didn't take much.

Quite a bit has happened since the last update, but mostly in the winter, hence Autumn didn't earn it's own post. But since it didn't, let's just say it was quite a breather episode in the overall scheme of things. Dwarves came and went, I gave them ~20k dwarfbucks of tribute, flipped a wrong lever when they were leaving, and now all of our offerings are in the aquifer. Who said I made any notes for myself? Did rebuild the depot just the right way in case my successor ever figures out which lever collapses it. Oh, and something intriguing happened - dwarves apparently have wagons now. Didn't screencap it, but the game basically claimed they do have wagons in the land where they simply do not exist and they have bypassed us because I messed with the entrance enough to turn it from a 3 tile wide one to a single tile one.

For the Winter, I managed to finish everything I planned to do with this fort and were just letting them idle until the season ended, but the siege came early and their "command" squad, complete with demonic master and all, fully riding giant rats and olms, ran straight into the anti-skelk weapon traps in the west. That somehow made the mounts hostile towards the riders and the thing just turned into a magnificent crescendo of limbs flying everywhere, either caused by goblins fighting mounts, the other way 'round, and the odd serrated blade wrecking things. Squad arriving from the east consisted mostly of hammerers, with the sole exception of a speargoblin, but it did mostly nothing other than getting attacked by a rather big pack of skelks and ran away after the northern one was dispatched. And speaking of it - that's the best part of the siege right there. I sent out the military to deal with whatever was left of the western squad, and they did so successfully, without even a single hit delivered according to their health. But Gizogin was missing. Via unit screen I've looked him up, and he was right in the northern squad, in martial trance, wrecking everything around him. Tried to send the rest of the squad to him, but there was a huge bout of trolls in the way that

managed to stall them until both Gizogin and an unnamed legendary were downed of overexertion. The former managed to rack up 21 kills before falling, the latter over 15, both have been granted tombs that respect that. Quickly after, the goblins fled and the siege of 213 was broken. A few new soldiers were recruited to bring the squad back to 7 dwarves strong, they should be ready to repel the next year's one. An interesting note - the unnamed legendary has spontaneously revived, yet has succumbed to suffocation a few days later, much like Puwuncobi did. Didn't start a spiral of revivals and suffocations, though, it may be related to the fact I unforbid the corpse... Someone should be able to spin that into a plot point somehow.

In other news. The anti-skelk defences have been stalled, due to the lack of metal needed to construct it - it's quite a major point of them that the serrated disks in them are to be constructed of silver, and if it's unavailable, copper. Both metals have been exhausted as I'm writing this, though we have a bunch of veins available to be mined and processed in plain sight, and we do have better weapons-grade metal available - bronze in abundance, steel in respectable amounts, and about 60 bars of iron.

Back in Obsidian 212, I've disabled the civilian burrow so I could work on projects on the surface. The civ burrow exists, but I did not update it with the constructions that are safe to visit aboveground, or the ones freshly built. Since I already uploaded the save, I'm afraid I must leave that to my successor. A lot of people have been dorfed to the best of my ability, with professions matching what they wanted at the time of dorfing - they may have turned from a mechanic into an engraver because I did not pay much heed when using Therapist to make everyone into a wall smoother. Sorry for that, but with less than 30 workers, I were really low on dwarfpower.

I cut down the entire tree farm/pasture to provide wood for an extension of the original DWR meant to power the cannon (Still, I have no idea whenever I should call it the Hellcannon, the Failcannon, or just the cannon. Correct me if you could.) and windmills for the device detailed below.

We also have received another artifact, pictured in the picdump I'll be presenting below. It has inspired me to build another pointless device that will probably kill more of the fortress than the enemies, but hey. It's a strategic device in a world of dwarfdom, what do you expect, at least I don't have a wizard hooked up set of pumps here.

Oh, and using the remainder of my overseer's authority, I am going to request that Kar Puwuncobi is put on the continual redorfing list as an administrative dwarf. Whew, that sure was a wall of text right there. Picdump follows.

```
Luzatfeb SPPS: 250 (32) "Rubarrow the Dimple of Trusting", a black-cap rin

This is a black-cap ring. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality.

black-cap.
```

First order of business, a random, useless artifact. I don't even remember who made it at this point, should be noticeable from the legendary skill though. Didn't get a single secretive mood this year, that's a success.

```
This is a enormous adamantine corkscrew. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is decorated with goblin-cap and encircled with bands of giant cave spider silk. This object menaces with spikes of clear garnet, elk bone and gabbro.

On the item is an image of Musöd Grimsmile the troll in adamantine. Musöd Grimsmile is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the troll Musöd Grimsmile in The Useless Frost in the midautumn of 179.

On the item is an image of Meli the shadow troll in blue jade. Meli is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the shadow troll Meli in The Useless Frost in the early winter of 152.

On the item is an image of The Uncommon Corridors the adamantine battle axe in reindeer bone.

Weight: <1 Basic Value: 2773200**
```

Moving on, a great artifact! A fey mood bringing us both a legendary metalcrafter and inspiration for a new doomsday device. I did not use the artifact itself in the doomsday device, I see this one more as the finishing pump of the cannon more than a simple piece of a pumpstack. Don't worry about adamantine, we've got more than 50 wafers left, and a tube not even touched yet by the looks of it. Do note - this one was made in the winter, after El Prez got his appraisal skill.

```
Engraved is a 'Strategia II' Zonrilbet rendition of a image of a sea monster. The image is the symbol of The Mystery of Gods, a local dwarven government.
```

```
FPS: 250 (36) Regkûbuk, "The Gloved Lances"

Engraved is a Udil Urmimònul rendition of a superiorly designed image of forgotten beasts. The image is the symbol of The Rack of Amusing, a dwarven civilization.
```

Browsing the latest engravings I found these. Well, I guess this could be made into a plot point also, but are we seriously wondering why we get so many eldritch abominations when our national symbols are things like said abominations? They probably figured we're going to worship them and are coming here by the wagonload. Think three of 'em arrived during my turn, one mentioned already because it mangled the DWR a bit, I did fix most of the damage though.

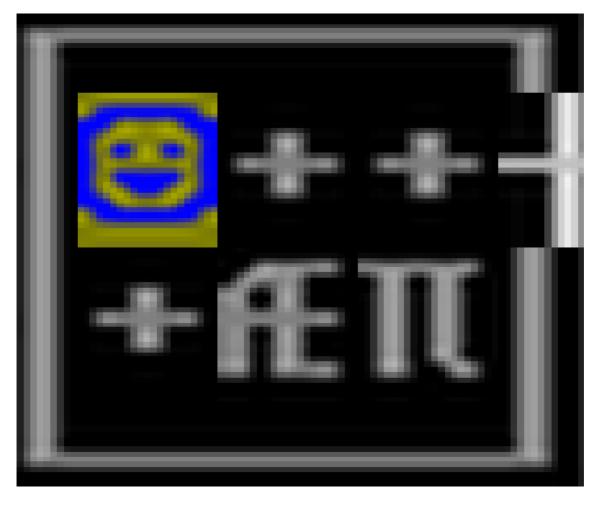
```
Eric II' Kilruduvel, Head Stone
Mego V' Sanrebäs, Chaos Crafter
I' Borushkivish, Stoneworker
                                               Head StoneworkerClean Self
                                                                                     Clean Self
                                                                                     Smelt galena Ore/R
                                                                                                   rap
Tasrak' Emenkol, Priest of Armok Smelt cassiterite Ore/R
'Ahrimahn' Olonstorlut, Stoneworker Sleep
'Kaamanen II' Såkzulkatthir, Mystic Architecttem in Bag
'Epithemius II' Biseklogem, The DoctorStore Item in Stockpile
'The Master' Oddomsanreb Govûlrovod, Eternal Magnificent Bastard
'CatalystParadox' Kolgasol, Slightly Oddore Item in Stockpile
'Andreus XVII' Shaligrigoth, The Immortalnk
'Halbezbin Somegret' Atirarkim, Weaponsmithruct lead Bin/R
'Rom Thimeth' Atolkib, Chief Medical Dwarfob
Benhul Likotathel, Soldier Sleep
                                                                                     Sleep
                                                                                                   Item in
                                                                                                                    Tomb
                   Athelakrul,
  lryrar'
                                                                                     Store Item in Bin
                                              Goremaster
 Ghills' Bimked, Soldier

Rridgway II' Lorbamònul, First Victim of the Faildaytockpile
stormtemplar the 2nd' Litastgubel, Spinnerb
  Slime' Mörulrab, Fleshsmith
                                                                                     Smelt cassiterite Ore/R
                                                                                     Smelt cassiterite Ore/R
 ThatAussieDwarf' Eralonol, Scheming Engineer
 Terrahex' Matustuth, Soldier
                                                                                     Pickup Equipment
                                                                                    Sleep
                                                                                    Store Item in Barrel
                                                                                    Store Owned Item
```

Have an unit list, too, after all the dorfings. As you can see, there's barely anyone to pick now, other than maybe the vast array of children. Oh, and we've got a helluva lot of legendaries apparently. The CMD is one in at least four skills, so I granted him a title and full-on royal quarters.

```
Town Shashmebzuth, "Hellcannon" FPS: 250 (32)
   Animals
              Kitchen
                          Stone
                                  Stocks
                                             Health
                                                       Justice
Created Wealth:
                                    Population:
                                                         34
                                                         (B) (C)
 Armor and Garb:
                                                                                             2
1
                                    Miners
                                                            3
                                                                                             None
None
None
 Other Objects
Architecture:
        Objects:
                                    Stoneworkers
                                                         \odot
                                                                     Swordsdwarves
                                                             None
                                                                    Swordmasters
                                                                                         8
                                                         \odot
                                    Metalsmiths
                                                                                             None
None
                                    Jewelers
                                                         (3)
                                                             None
Imported Wealth:
                                                                                             None
None
                       656133*
                                                             None
                                                            None
8
                                    Peasants
Exported Wealth:
                       5920*
                                                                                             None
None
Food Stores:
                                                                    Elite Mrksdwrus
Wrestlers
                                                                                             None
                  5841
                           1431
1674
                                                                    Elite Wrestlers
Recruit/Others
                                                                                             None
None
 Fish
                                    Trained Animals
                                                             None
32
                                                                                         843
                                    Other Animals
  Plant
                  Other
```

And here's a general state of the fortress. As I wrote above, a breather episode, this year... but it was fun to play, actually. I have to admit, I haven't played DF for what, three months before I got PMed that I'm up for some premium Hellcannon business, simply because I were bored with it. But now? I'm going to go get 0.34 and gen up the worst hell hole Armok himself can grant me and kick it in the spore sacks.



I have no idea how to end that sentence to make it fully dwarven, so have a close-up of a sleeping craftsdorf.

TURN 12 - DARK_T_ZERATUL

Da dwums

Journal of Zeratul, Dark Templar

1st Granite, 214

I woke up today, and my memories were gone.

That's not entirely true. I remember bits and pieces... Fragments, as though the highlights of my life were being told by another. And not just my life, but the lives of everyone who lived in Hellcannon. I am not sure what has transpired, but I have this feeling that I should be dead, and yet... Here I am, alive and with a body that I do not think was previously my own. I had no time to fully comprehend the magnitude of these events, however, as Kar Puwuncobi XLII came into my room and told me it was "my turn." When I asked what he meant, he laughed, then shook his head, placed a scroll on top of my dresser, and left. As I read through it, a flood of horrible memories rushed back to me as I realized what he meant. The lottery had been drawn, and my name came up.

This year, I would run Hellcannon.

Journal of Eric, Head Stoneworker of Hellcannon and Master of Ethereal Associations.

It's the dawn of a new year. Time for those who've survived another year in this hellhole to party themselves into a stupor while the new overseer gets his bearings, including myself! The party will have plenty of floorspace this year, though, seeing as how there are so few of us left that survived the last two years of disaster. I suppose I only survived because my job keeps me in new cosntruction and excavation zones, away from trouble. That old book has kept me company quite well through the chaos, and has been very enlightening. I think it's time to really get the paranormal wagon rolling, and figure out how I'm going to avoid going insane or slipping away into the afterlife if I die again. It's all in the book...

Deathsword's Log

So, I woke up on this new body. Again. I think I lost count of how many bodies I've ended up in this way. Either way, people seem to have taken the sudden change in behaviour of this body as a sign that I am a goblin spy. Which, truth be told, is ridiculous. I am certainly *not* a goblin spy. Nor will I ever be one. Nor have I ever been one. No, indeed I have never had any association with goblins at all. Any claim to the opposite is clearly a lie created by someone that would like to see me out of their way. Whatever that way may be. In fact, said way has nothing to do with goblins. At all. Despite great evindence pointing otherwise.

So. In short. Not a goblin s	ρv.
------------------------------	-----

End of Log.

Diary of DevilEd

Today I saw a funny looking thing in the caves, daddy said to just ignore it. I found a rock on the floor today too, it has the initials D.E. on it, those are my initials too. I kept the rock.

Journal of Zeratul, Dark Templar

4th of Granite, 214

I've spent the last four days getting acquainted with the fortress. What I've found is... Well, rather disturbing.

- *There are no less than six forgotten beasts prowling around in the caverns.
- *The ghosts of eleven of our former citizens are still haunting the fortress.
- *There is an undead cave ogre on fire in the magma that is somehow not dead-dead.
- *One room contains over a hundred levers. Three are labeled. I'm scared to touch the others.
- *Stormtemplar the 2nd is sitting in the dining room, loudly complaining that he can't pick anything up because both of his hands are missing.

Also, the skeletal wildlife are still a problem. Kaamanen II wandered outside to do... Something... And got gored by a pack of skeletal reindeer bulls. Some of the others have given the big one a name, which means it's probably time to send the military to do something about it.

You know what? If I'm the one who has to be managing this madness for the next year, then dammit I'm going to make it worth my while. I'm having the miners carve out a nice big tomb for me at the end of the new catacomb wing. I know I can never survive this place (no one does), but at least I can die in style.

9th of Granite, 214

The battle was epic. Urist Imiknorris III, The Master, Caquat Shibbi, and I met the skreinder bulls on the field on battle, whereupon we proceeded to completely dismember them. Urist was particularly effective, laying into them with her axe with a fury I've never seen before. About halfway through the battle I realized her left hand was gone, and I honestly have no idea when that happened. Ghills, meanwhile, came outside and then proceeded to complain that the skreinder were between him and his weapon. I stayed behind to clean up after the others went back inside, and was ambushed by a hitherto unseen skreinder! Fortunately, it was no match for my unique fighting style, and after clamping my teeth onto the front of its skull I was easily able to hack it into pieces with my axe.

Stormtemplar is still complaining about his lack of hands. I'm heading outside to try and drown out the sounds of his wailing.

12th of Granite, 214

So, hey, that scroll El Presidente gave me that informed me I was the new leader? Turns out it also binds my spirit to this wretched world for the duration, so I can't get out of it through death. Seems there was *yet another* skreinder lurking outside when I went out there to clear my head, but before I could bite its head and hack its limbs off I was caught in a freak snowstorm. I staggered around blindly for several hours while it kicked me repeatedly, until at last its antler tore into my face and I embraced the sweet, sweet release of death...

Or so I thought, anyway. Well, I guess that fancy expensive tomb that was carved out for me will go to waste. Shame, that...

I've just had a thought. Whoever kills that damned skreinder and avenges my death will get my tomb. This I command!

15th of Granite, 214

You've gotta hand it to our militia: they really are the best of the best. Urist, Gizogin, and Ghills went outside in the midst of a snowstorm and dispatched by killer. However, the glory of the finishing blow went to the Resident Badass, Gizogin IV, who will now reap the promised rewards of a fabulous tomb all to himself.

20th of Granite, 214

Some migrants showed up, despite the danger. They were immediately set upon by a pair of skoxes. Fortunately, one of them had the good sense to bring not only a bow but a quiver full of silver arrows, and chased them off while they all got inside. Well... Almost all. There was that gem setter that ran in completely the opposite direction and got a skox hoof to the head for her troubles.

Meanwhile, another ghost showed up. This one's haunting Rridgway II.

Reudh's Ramblings

It's time for me to go. I feel the world releasing its grasp on me.

I found mother. I forgive the citizens of Hellcannon, all dead themselves, for their trespass. I even forgive... Mother, what's his name? Strategea? Strategia? He was nice to her, even though she was mad. Here she is cured. The person I knew before the insanity took her to Shashmebzuth.

I found Strategia. At least, the person I think he was. Healed of all wounds. Healed of the evil he committed during his reign.

And the rest of us. We have to go.

It's time.

Goodbye, fair friends of mine. Goodbye, leb. Goodbye, Erica. You both were my best friends in life. Come, mother, let us depart.

Journal of Eric, Head Stoneworker of Hellcannon.

I'm hearing voices. Some jackass just said "goodbye Erica" in a taunting manner. Even the dead are calling me a pansy woman! Where did I go wrong!?

It sounded like Reudh. When I find you, you little cunt, I'll fire you in a manner more horrifying than any manager has ever fired their laborers before!

And the good news is that book I found in that hollow pillar details the summoning and binding of

spirits. The secrets of life and death, they say. Nothing about controlling the mindless dead yet, though.

Journal of Zeratul, Dark Templar

1st Felsite, 214

Things have been rather quiet since my untimely demise at the hands of a vicious skreinder. We've completed the basics of the tomb for Gizogin V (I found the tomb of the ACTUAL Gizogin IV the other day and realized I had his name wrong this whole time), but apparently no one was allowed to work the forge where I'd ordered the silver statues made. I remedied that, right after having two statues and a door installed in the tomb my body was placed in, and ordering all the walls engraved.

Oh, and The Master died of thirst in the hospital. Apparently no one remembered to bring him anything to drink. Now Tryrar's infant son is going around yelling, "Dwums! Da dwums!" at the top of his lungs. Even dead, some things still manage to surprise me.

8th Felsite, 214

Stormtemplar the 2nd has somehow become "mysteriously" locked in his room. Shortly after, our Gem Setter wandered outside to get a drink and ran into a skelk, which ended pretty much as expected.

Also, this happened:





Deathsword's Log

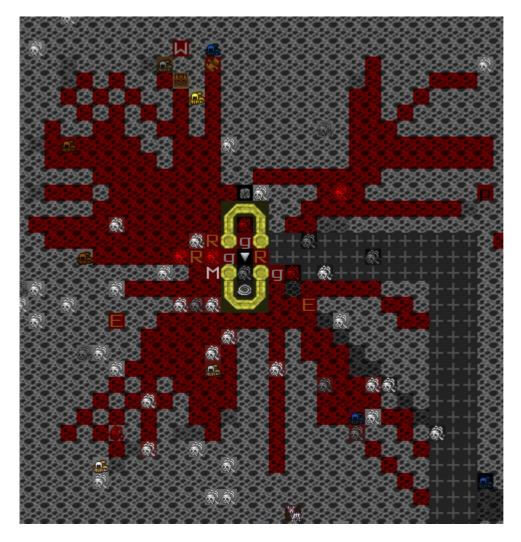
The overseer told me to lock Stormtemplar's room as soon as he was inside (he has no hands after all) while nobody was watching. Since I am certainly not a goblin spy, I fulfilled his orders. Just like someone who is certainly not a goblin spy would. Like me.

End of Log

Journal of Zeratul, Dark Templar

19th Felsite, 214

Three ghosts have been put to rest, leaving us with just four nine more restless souls to deal with. A small group of goblins showed up and killed a skreindeer, before apparently taking one look at the massive pile of bones and blood outside our fortress and deciding to just hang around in the hills for someone to go outside.



Speaking of going outside, I think they'll have some company soon. See, before the goblins showed up, a caravan of eight elf merchants arrived with all manner of goods and somehow managed not to get murdered by the skeletal wildlife. Of course, because they weren't murdered by skeletal wildlife, it meant I had to actually see what appropriate trade goods we had... Which was nothing. So I sent Ahrimahn to take their stuff and tell them to GTFO. Hopefully they'll run into the goblins on their way out and our problem will be solved. I also noticed some foliage starting to grow along the path to the depot, and ordered it paved over so that an ill-timed growth won't hinder a real (read: Dwarven) caravan.

6th Hematite, 214

Despite seizing half their goods, the elves still hung around for a few weeks before departing. When they did, I expected the goblins to immediately run them down... No such luck. Instead, they huddled in the hills while a pair of skreindeer scattered the merchants. Only when one of them ran in the direction of the goblins did ONE of them decide to chase him down. The goblin killed the mule, but it looked like the elf was going to get away... Until a pack of skoxes showed up. Both the elf and the goblin were far, far away from anyone else. Neither survived. As to the rest, the remainder of the elves eventually regrouped and escaped, while the rest of the goblins are still sitting in the hills doing... Absolutely nothing at all.

Meanwhile, among the goblins...

Stozu: Hey.

Stuzo: Yeah?

Stozu: You ever wonder why we're here?

Stuzo: It's one of life's great mysteries isn't it? Why are we here? I mean, are we the product of some cosmic coincidence, or is there really an Armok watching everything? You know, with a plan for us and stuff. I don't know, man. But it keeps me up at night.

Stozu:What?! I mean why are we out here, in this freezing wasteland.

Stuzo: Oh. Uh... yeah.

Stozu: What was all that stuff about Armok?

Stuzo: Uh...hm? Nothing.

Stozu: You wanna talk about it?

Stuzo: No.

Stozu: You sure?

Stuzo: Yeah.

Stozu: Seriously though, why are we out here? As far as I can tell, it's just a freezing wasteland in the middle of nowhere. No way in or out.

Stuzo: Mm hmm.

Stozu: The only reason that we set up a camp here, is because they have a fortress over there. And the only reason they have a fortress over there, is, well... Ok we don't have any clue why they're retarded enough to be here.

Journal of Zeratul, Dark Templar

28th Hematite, 214

Those goblins are still out there. Several days ago, a pack of skoxes ran into them. The fight was short and brutal, but in the end it served only to reduce both groups' numbers, rather than wipe either of them out. Three goblins remained; one decided to make a run for it, but ran into the weapon traps at the edge of our territory, had both his legs sliced off, and quickly bled out. The other two continued to sit in the hills until our glassmaker decided to wander outside on a whim, and then led them on a merry chase across the countryside. One of them was very nearly eviscerated by the weapon traps, but jumped aside at the last moment and was merely stunned by falling off a cliff. Unfortunately, poor Fath Meskosoth then ran around the entrance and off into the distance, away from safety, where he was cut down.

Stormtemplar the 2nd is still screaming about being unable to put his things away with no hands.

10th Malachite, 214

The goblin that was wounded by the traps limped away. His friend, however, hung around until ThatAussieDwarf came up to clean some of the blood off the traps. He saw the goblin, freaked out, and instead of running down into the safety of the fortress *ran outside*. For eight days the goblin chased him all over the landscape.

It is at this point that I will take a break from ThatAussieDwarf's heroic flight to note that I believe I have solved the question of the source of the ever-persistent wilddeath. While he was running from the goblin, he passed a herd of reindeer... Real, live, flesh and blood reindeer. These reindeer subsequently wandered into the line of traps and were eviscerated. Now, call me crazy, but I believe that we may in fact be at least partially responsible for the plague of undeath that haunts the surface. Perhaps if we weren't slaughtering them en masse and leaving their carcasses to rot in the snow, they wouldn't be rising as skeletal hordes and trying to kill us back. But anyway, back to ThatAussieDwarf...

Eventually, after making a complete circle, he finally had the good sense to run back into the fortress. And, of course, it wasn't until then that Terrahex caught up to the goblin, hacked off his leg, and let him bleed to death. Thus ends the goblin "invasion." Also, Stormtemplar the 2nd finally died. Seems he was unable to get any water due to being locked in his room for two months. Funny, that.

Diary of stormtemplar

I died...Again. I give up on this fort. I lost my f****** hands then they f****** locked my in my room. Why? BECAUSE THEY WERE PISSED THAT I WANTED HANDS. I'mma cut off my hands in my new body to spite them god-dammit. AND WHINING...OH GOD THERE WILL BE WHINING. THEY SHALL KNOW WHINE AS THEY NEVER HAVE BEFORE. THEY'LL DRINK SO MUCH TO COPE THAT THEY WILL DRINK THEMSELVES SOBER. THEY WILL RENAME WINE SO AS TO NEVER HAVE TO SPEAK THAT WORD AGAIN. THEN I WILL STRANGLE THEM ALL WITH ARM STUBS.

Journal of Zeratul, Dark Templar

2nd Galena, 214

Things came today! First, some migrants. A craftsdwarf, a bone carver, an herbalist, a shearer, and Vegdrasil the Brewmaster. Second, another Forgotten Beast showed up in the caverns. Yawn. Third, a pack of skreindeer showed up and, one by one, wandered into the grinders outside the fortress to be rendered into reindeer parts. Except that one of the skreindeer saw the migrants, and started chasing them. Fortunately, it got distracted by the bone carver's kitten and the migrants managed to make it inside while the kitten got its head caved in.

From the ENTIRELY DWARVEN and NOT AT ALL ELVEN diary of AXEN the GREAT (KID OR ADULT, I AM NOT SURE)

I arrived here at HELLCANNON on the trail of my BASTARD FAMILY WHO LEFT ME WITH WOLVES at the age of TWO.

I heard that LORD LADY REUDH MAD WOMAN and MR REUDH STONEMAN PERSON came here and that REUDH FAMILY is dead of the FORGOTTEN BEAST SICKNESS.

That is BAD BECAUSE NO REVENGE.

Now I, AXEN, have NO CAUSE FOR LIVING IN HELLCANNON. I have heard tell that the dwarves here are EQUALLY MAD as my MAD LORD LADY MOTHER to live here. I think I will LIKE IT HERE.

Journal of Zeratul, Dark Templar

8th Galena, 214

Everything's been very quiet and relatively peaceful. I think this is going to be a good year.

12th Galena, 214

We're fucked.

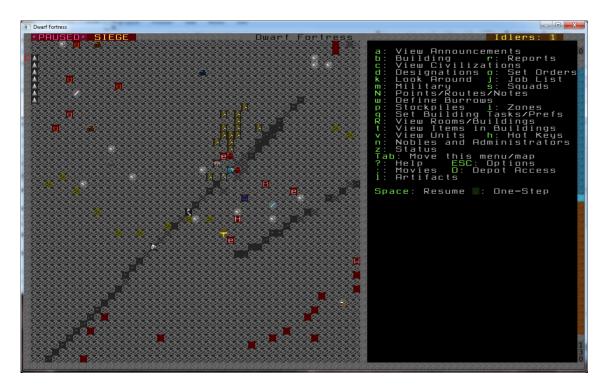
First, Tasrak went outside to pick up some poor soul's body and got chased by a skreindeer. I sent the militia to save him, but a pack of skoxes intervened. Tasrak, Gizogin V, and Ghills all died. Caquat Shibbi became an Axe Lord, but is still fighting the skoxes. Then, to top it off, the goblins sieged us. Did I mention this is all happening in the middle of a snowstorm? I'm calling the militia back, pulling the lever that LordSlowpoke labeled, and crossing my ectoplasmic fingers that everything will work out.

14th Galena, 214

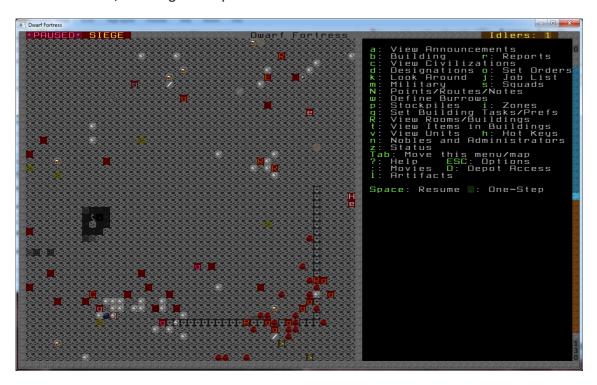
Dariush III just went topside and started shooting at the ogres surrounding the entrance. Wait. Ogres? Why are there ogres? HOLY SHIT THAT'S A LOT OF OGRES.



Caquat's still out there, she can probably deal with... Wow. Yeah, I dunno if she can deal with that many goblins.



On the plus side, the traps at the edge of our territory did a number on one squad... But there's at least three more, including a full squad of archers.



Could this be the end of Hellcannon?

18th Galena, 214

Nο

While Dariush III was quickly slain by the combined horde of trolls and ogres, Caquat - surrounded by nearly twenty goblin hammerers - immediately engaged the goblins' hammer lord. She plunged her axe into his back and tore out his kidneys, before hacking off one leg, then the other, and finally decapitated him. As his head sailed off in a bloody arc, the rest of the goblins turned and fled...

Including an entire crossbow squad that hadn't even entered the fray. The ogres and trolls were more persistent, throwing themselves into the traps with reckless abandon until Caquat arrived and, pissed off that they were standing between her and a well-deserved drink, hacked the survivors apart.

To celebrate our complete and utter victory, ThatAussieDwarf claimed a mechanics shop and crafted The Admired Shafts, a cassiterite mechanism with a picture of a goblin on it.

From the ENTIRELY DWARVEN and NOT AT ALL ELVEN diary of AXEN the GREAT (KID OR ADULT, I AM NOT SURE)

AXEN HAS SOMETHING TO SAY.

Caquat the GOBLIN HEADCHOPPER needs to HAVE A CELEBRATION FOR HER TENACITY. I think that I NEED TO BECOME LIKE CAQUAT.

ALSO, AM I AN ADULT? OR A child?

AXEN CANCELS SHOUT LOUDLY: INTERRUPTED BY PARTY

Journal of Zeratul, Dark Templar

3rd Limestone, 214

Four dwarves were caught outside and killed by skreindeer today. Vegdrasil was heading out to clean a trap and Conchobar II seemed to think that the weapon he needed for sparring was lying in the snow instead of in the armory, but what Ahirmahn and Epithemius II were doing out there I will never know (I think Epithemius II was getting a drink, though since the ground is iced over year-round I'm not entirely sure where he thought he was going to be drinking from).

From the ENTIRELY DWARVEN and NOT AT ALL ELVEN diary of AXEN the GREAT

YAY!

Mr. ZERATUL-LEADER-PERSON just told me that I am an ADULT OF GIGANTIC PROPORTIONS, and as such I wish to have a STATUE ERECTED IN MY AND CALQUAT'S HONOUR.

While you are at that, MR ZERATUL LEADER PERSON, could I have a BEER or a WINE please?

ALSO MAKE ME A STONEWORKER.

HAHA. I AM A DWARF. NOT AN ELF.

Deathsword's Log

Got message today. "Nearly there" it says. So I point out that there are some unclaimed stuff in the surface that we could grab. Wasn't counting on skox herd. They did most of the killing. Goblins, with which I am in no way connected to, arrived later. Don't think Overseer is getting suspicious towards me, so that's good. Not that there is any reason for him to be suspicious of me, as I am certainly **NOT** a goblin spy. The message had nothing to do with the goblins. Talked to TAD about possibility of Overseer suspecting me. He says not to worry. Thankfuly, no one overheard out talk since that Axen

was shouting around.

So, to sum it all:

- Most of militia is dead.
- Overseer is not suspecting me.
- I, Deathsword, am not a goblin spy.
- Axen likes shouting.

End of Log

From the ENTIRELY DWARVEN and NOT AT ALL ELVEN diary of AXEN the GREAT

THIS IS HOW DWARVES ARE SUPPOSED TO SPEAK CORRECT?

I WAS TOLD THIS WHEN I WAS LITTLE AFTER I WAS ADOPTED.

But it gets tiring sometimes, so... I RELAX FOR A SHORT TIME.

THE DWARF THAT RAISED ME SAID THAT SHOUTING AT OTHERS IS A GOOD WAY TO CONVINCE OTHERS THAT YOU ARE NOT AN ELF.

I AM NOT AN ELF

SO I SHOUT.

Journal of Zeratul, Dark Templar

13th Sandstone, 214

Terrahex died in the hospital today, as no one brought him any water. I didn't realize his injuries had been that grievous. On the plus side, no one will have to go outside for his corpse; he can just go straight to the tombs. I also laid two more ghosts to rest.

I've also decided on a project that will define my reign. Armok willing, I can complete it in time. There are too many prying eyes, though... Too many who would think it madness and seek to stop it. While I am already dead, and thus cannot be harmed, they may decide to sabotage it in other ways. Soon, though, it will be complete, and all will tremble at its glory!

Journal of Mego

So apparently Zeratul is wanting to make a project to symbolize his reign. I told him The Master already made an obsidian penis.

He didn't seem to like that comment.

From the ENTIRELY DWARVEN and NOT AT ALL ELVEN diary of AXEN the GREAT

HOW COME YOU GUYS DON'T SHOUT?

FROM AXEN, LOVE AND DWARFISM FOREVER

Journal of Kaamanen III

17rd Limestone, 214

So here I travel towards certain death that is Hellcannon. It is not something I do lightly, but my soul cannot find peace as long as those vile beasts roam free, after spilling so much blood. My blood. Only after they haunt this world no more I can find peace.

Journal of Zeratul, Dark Templar

4th Moonstone, 214

Oh, so much has happened in the past few weeks. First, the dwarven caravan arrived! They even killed a couple skreindeer for good measure on their way in. I decided that this was a good time to unload the caged skanimals we had lying around, but several of the skoxes got out while El Presidente was moving the cages. Fortunately, the large animal pen was nearby, and so were the militia. The skoxes were immediately set upon by Caquat, a wolf, a bear, and two giant eagles. Naturally, they never stood a chance. Fortunately, I did manage to trade a skreindeer for some food.

I've also discovered that there's a weapon somewhere outside that is not forbidden. I don't know what or where it is, but various individuals keep trying to go out and claim it, only to fall victim to the skreindeer hordes; we've lost Axen and Conchobar IV in the last week alone. The other cause of skanimal-related death is attempting to clean the traps, which recently claimed The Counselor, our diagnoser, and Rom Thimeth, our Chief Medical Dwarf. Not that they were doing their job or anything anyway, because I've discovered that a broken bone - any broken bone - might as well be a death sentence. No one ever brings water to the hospital, so going there is like being doomed to die of thirst. We just lost Urist Imiknorris III to a broken toe. A TOE. This was entirely preventable, and I've promoted Caquat to Captain of the Guard in his stead.

5th Opal, 214

I've done it! My plan is complete! Some thought me mad. Well, okay, none thought me mad, because no one knew what I it was that I was ordering. But it's complete! The tunnels were carved. The grate was set in place.



All that remained was to carve a ramp in a very specific location, a task that required a very careful choice of miners... So I picked Deathsword, who is definitely not a goblin spy, to do it.



And thusly did I precipitate the draining of the upper lake into the lower cavern levels!



You may ask... Why? Why do such a simple feat of engineering for such an insane and theoretically pointless result? Well, because I can, really, though it started with noticing just how much stuff was at the bottom of the upper lake. I thought, if I could dredge it, we could get it. Eventually. In about five years or so. And who knows? Maybe the flood will drown some of the horrors of the lower cavern. Win/win! Either way, everyone will remember me as the dwarf who made it happen!

19th Obsidian, 214

Even after this long, I still get entertaining surprises. A goblin ambush party showed up at the same time and in the same place as a herd of skreindeer, with the result that both problems rather neatly solved each other.

1st Granite, 215

And so my year at the head of Hellcannon comes to an end. I can already feel my spirit slipping away from here, hopefully to someplace nice and dark with lots and lots of beer and no wilddeath. To my successor, I have only this to say: good luck, and you have my condolences on getting picked to run this foul place. You've no manner of luck at all.

TURN 13 - GHILLS

Haunts

Look around, at the central hall of our mountainhome. Glorious, isn't it? It was not always so. We are lucky to have come so far from so little. Look at the safety and security of our halls, listen to the fading clacking of minecarts, and hear the whispers of our ancestors. They are all around us. What do they tell you, young dwarf?

I don't know, Grandpa. There are so many of them around! All they do is talk.

Well, let's see. What about that one, near the flowing pillar. I shall ask his story.

Ghills' Tale

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: Ghills started his turn as an in-character story of sorts, but appears to have given up on that halfway. So most of it is OOC.]

Year 215, in the Spring (I Think)

We sprinted into this place barely ahead of the skeletal wilddeath. 2 others didn't make it, only my wife Dariush IV and I managed to enter the fort. Everything aboveground was a frozen wasteland, and below ground not much better. Little kittens wandered the surface for lack of owners, while crazed inhabitants make mad dashes to clean the surface traps that keep the wilddeath occupied.

I was lucky - I know a wound from a broken bone, and tended victims of UrDeth the Falling Spats in my youth. I was granted a prominent place inside the fort, and relieved from all responsibility to clean and tend the traps. I was the chief medical dwarf of this fort, then.

An old dwarf named Eric II panicked and screamed about gloves and equipment. He could not move to find them, and thought it was my duty as doctor to get him back on his feet. His feet were gone. I could not help but think that he must be utterly incapable of handling stress to behave like that. Another dwarf named Tasrak II created some leather masterpiece - I could not get close enough to examine it in detail.

The only other news of note that spring was that some elvish merchants made it through to the fort, but were so distraught over the loss of their comrades, oxen, and the time spent fleeing from wilddeath that they left without trading at all. Elves!

Hellcannon was surprisingly quiet that season. The other inhabitants spoke in hushed tones of dead

comrades, and strange cries echo in the caverns below, but little disturbed us. Not even the ghosts haunting this fort. There are many now, and were many then, but they are mostly quiet, unassuming souls. One was even laid to rest then, with a beautiful slab in the catacombs. Kitkun II told me that there were 3 new distinct cries coming from the lower caverns, and one, a large steam cloud, seemed to be trying to beak into the lower plumbing. No creatures succeeded in entering the fort, however. All was calm, like the peace before the storm.

I took up engravings in my spare time and made my first attempts on my bedroom walls. You may go there and see them if you like. I have forgotten much about that long-ago time, and they doubtless record more than I can say now. They were only first attempts, but what they lack in beauty perhaps they achieve in accuracy.

Someone thought it was a good idea to leave the water-wheel/main sewer room *and* the top of the volcano with open access to the caverns (FBs can swim, yo!). Now we've got 2 different FBs that swam on in and started rampaging around - I've blocked off the central staircase so they won't wander up into the fort proper, but the forge and a bunch of dwarfs are blocked off too. Trying to get an alternate staircase dug before they all dehydrate, but for some reason no one is willing to pick up a pick. ::) And the random skeletal gremlin didn't help either.

Strategia and one other dwarf - Stormtrooper? - got cornered while trying kill the FBs and didn't make it.

The human traders actually got here, and we actually managed to trade with them, despite the broker getting a strange mood *after* they arrived and I flipped the "broker needed at depot" setting.

In other news, I think 1/2 of fortress 'residents' are actually ghosts. They wander around dining halls, (try to) sleep in their beds - Reudh II is particularly fond of this. And it looks like a herd of cats is hanging out around where their former person died (the corpse is still there, they've kind of clustered around it and are randomly attacking each other). The necromantic aura of Hellcannon's biome is probably trying to turn the whole thing into an undead fort. ;)

Also, we got migrants and they all died at the hooves of skox.

Kar made his artifact just fine, don't worry. He won't die from that. The poisonous glass spider lurking in the magma plumbing, now, that's definitely a danger. :)

2 more FBs showed up down in the caverns. I think the total is about 8 now.

```
The Forgotten Beast Nosmul has come! A gigantic feathered sauropod It has a long swinging trunk and it belches and croaks Its blue feathers are fluffed—out Beware its poisonous bite!

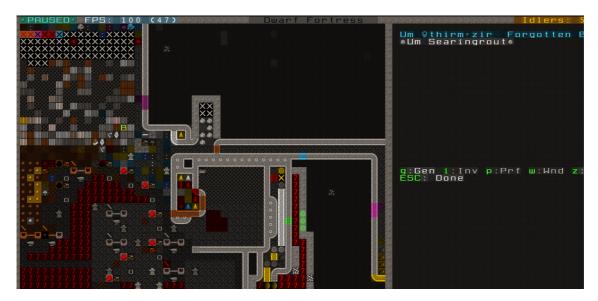
Press Enter to close window

The Forgotten Beast Tubu Budzupogush has come! A towering elephant with external ribs It has a pair of long antennae and it has a gaunt appearance Its gray hair is unkempt Beware its webs!
```

I tried to wrap up dealing with the two sewer-loving FBs. One of them is walled off in the waterwheel room on 111:



The pet goose in there tried to go for a swim in the pretty water and managed to attract the attention of the 2nd FB, the aforementioned poisonous glass spider. For his sins he gets to starve with the FB. The spider chased the goose around a bit and is now camped out at the bottom of the magma plumbing on 110, the same level as the forges. You can see the bottom of the alternate staircase a bit up and to the right of the FB:



I've tried to ID and block off places where the plumbing opens up into the fort, but there are a ton of places where that happens, especially in the upper soil levels. The mining areas had several convoluted paths involving different staircases and 1-tile ramps that would let the FBs into the fort, so I've just blocked off the lower mining areas. I don't *think* that made it impossible for the dwarfs in the lower living quarters to get back into the main fort (and food stockpiles), but if that did happen they've got some food down there so there's some time before they starve.

The alternate staircase is not going well. It seems like the dorfs are refusing to dig staircases unless they are on the same z-level as the staircase, not sure why. They'll happily mine it out once they're on the same z-level. Alternate staircase is a bit east and north of the current 2-tile staircase.

Here's the current state of the fort. Not to shabby, aside from the FBs running around.:)

```
Created Wealth:
                                                             29
                                       Population:
 Armor and Garb:
                                       Miners
 Furniture:
Other Objects:
Architecture:
                                       Stoneworkers
                                                                 None
                                                                 1 5
                                       Rangers
Metalsmiths
   splayed
                                       Jewelers
                                                                 None
                                        raftsdwarves
                                                                 4
Imported Wealth:
                         730827 ※
                                                                 None
7
None
Exported Wealth:
                         6590※
Food Stores:
                   6794
                             1656
1434
1731
                                                                 None
64
           1 3 3
1 0 9 7
   ish
                                         ained Animals
                                                             ΠI
                   Other
 Plant
                                       Other Animals
```

Journal of Stormtemplar

Carved into the fabric of reality

You know what? Screw this fort. It's horrible. Seriously, I try to posses some moron so I can go fight and everyone informs me I'm a "thresher" WHAT THE **** IS A THRESHER? HAS ONE EVER BEEN NEEDED IN THE FORT'S HISTORY? Seriously, I'm sure there have been moments where overseers had said "Wow, a legendary hammerdwarf would have been awesome there", but has fort ever fallen due to lack of a thresher? Are there threshing emergencies? Threshing alert levels perhaps? NO BECAUSE IT'S A ****** USELESS JOB THAT NO SANE PERSON WOULD EVER UNDERTAKE. Until there's an ACTUAL FIGHTER available to be taken, I'm gonna stay a ghost. Getting out my frustration by stabbing a journal into the side of reality is pretty awesome.

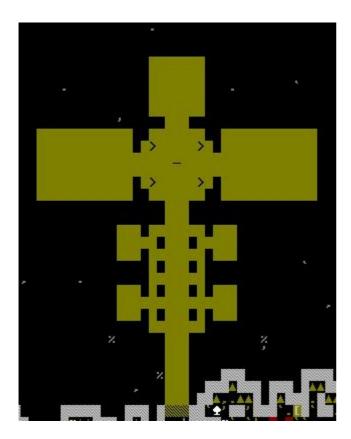
TURN 14 - EPITHEMIUS

Anything inevitably fatal

Epithemius' Journal

18th of Limestone, 215.

A new quill and a new sheet of parchment. A fine way to begin the tale of my overseeing of the fortress "Shashmebzuth", or Hellcannon in the human tongue. I've just arrived and set up my things. Upon entering this hellishly designed fortress, I realise that the hospital is terrible. I've ordered the miners to create something more relaxing to rest and heal in, as these next few months will NOT be pleasant for the military as we attempt to secure the entry of the migrants into the fortress. I've added a bit more aethsetics, also not to mention 4 dedicated rooms for doctors (including myself). It's a bit more modular, with much room for expansion, should I need to house a large amount of migrants.



8th of Sandstone, 215.

I told the damn miners to hurry up already, some lunatic named "Eric the Second" has been screaming in pain down in the entrance for weeks now. By the time I can attempt some sort of half-assed surgery on him, he'll probably have succumbed to infection. My priority is that hospital, and I'll finish it and have it stocked by the end of the year. Also, I must be sure to make a note out to Mego the Fourth not to use adamintine thread-that stuff holds wounds together excellently, but it's worth more than my beard for a sole strand.



1st of Timber, 215.

It appears that we've managed to have another 4 migrants into the fortress. They shall be processed into fields suitable for them. In other news, we've got another forgotten terror coming into our caverns. We should be safe, however, the seal designed by my predecessors should hold them at bay permanently.

```
Town Shashmebzuth, "Hellcannon"
   Animals
               Kitchen
                            Stone
                                      Stocks
                                                Health
                                                            Justice
Created Wealth:
                                                              33
                           7225871* Population:
                                                                 3
1
1
2
5
None
  Armor and Garb:
                                       Miners
                                                              (1) (1) (1)
                                                                                                     None
                                                                                                    None
None
None
None
None
  Other Objects:
Architecture:
                                       Stoneworkers
                                                                          Swordsdwarves
                                                              (I) (I) (I)
                                                                          Swordmasters
                                       Metalsmiths
Jewelers
  Held/Worn:
                                                                                                     None
 Imported Wealth:
                         734320*
                                                                          Hammer Lords
Speardwarves
                                                                                                     None
                                                                  None
                                                                                                     None
                                        Peasants
Exported Wealth:
                         6770×
                                                                          Spearmasters
                                                                                                     None
                                                                  None
                                                                                                     None
                                                                          Elite Mrksdwrvs
Wrestlers
Elite Wrestlers
Recruit/Others
 Food Stores:
                    6818
                                                                                                     None
                                       Farmers
                                                                                                 None
                    Seeds
Drink
Other
                                       Trained Animals
                                                                                                     None
None
  Fish
                                                              A
                                        Other Animals
```

15th of Timber.

We've been sieged by the goblins, just as a caravan arrives, It didn't fare well for the traders. This may pose a difficulty in the future for trade ocnsidering literally none of them survived.

1st of Moonstone.

Due to the lack on the miner's interest in our new hospital, I've repurposed our siege engine workshop, as we don't have a single siege engine. It's far easier this way. The hospital can now also double as a mass migrant storage room for future overseers.

17th of Moonstone.

I've made a complete mistake. I cannot find the sealing lever, and dwarves are dying by blundering into the outside world. We're down to 26 dwarves. It's not pleasant. I've decided to simply put down a door to simplfy the process due to inept management processes.

I've made a list of the remaining surviving dwarves:



Deathsword's Log

They are here. Right on schedule. So the goblins (with which I have no connection to at all) killed the caravan. So we get told to go and grab the caravan's stuff, but the overseer, after a whole bunch of deaths, denies that he gave the order. I was on break, so I didn't need to get up there. Would've been wierd too, and would probably result in a bunch of uncomfortable questions. What kind of questions? Mostly why I went for the hoods and coats instead of the socks, of course. Obviously. Not questions about why the goblins wouldn't attack me. If they didn't attack me, it's because I was being sneaky, not that I am a goblin spy. Which I am not. As stated many, *many* times. I saw that TAD guy muttering something about a plan or whatnot. He got all quiet when I asked him about it. I guess I'll need to keep an eye on him, should his plans conflict with mine. Said plans are, *obviously* not related to helping the goblins, since that would be just stupid. Obviously.

End of Log

Epithemius' Journal

9th of Opal.

Some raving lunatic named "Rridgway the Second" has been running down the masons hallways shouting about a bizzare need for "rock bars". I only hope that we have the necessary materials for him to finish his construction, and that the only artefact to be constructed under my reign is not foolish. Knowing the dwarves, however, that may be overly optimistic.

12th of Opal.

Thank the gods! We had all of the necessary materials for his craft. He has begun his supposed "mysterious construction". I must admit, I am interested as to what it will be.

TURN 15 – IEB

Oh My Fucking God and Other Amazing Stories Of The Benevolent Overlord Of Hellcannon.

It is once again my pleasant duty of presiding over the dwarves of Hellcannon and generally be an awesome guy when it comes to keeping everyone ali- OH MY FUCKING GOD ALL THESE GHOSTS

```
'Reudh II' Dataniklist, Ghostly Stoic Undead
Dumed Kikrostnëlas, Ghostly Armorer Undead
Urvad Nosîmlitast, Ghostly Gem Cutter Undead
Erush Uucarrurast, Ghostly Gem Setter Undead
'Stormtemplar the 2nd' Litastgubel, Ghostly Useless Cripple
'Stormtemplar the 3rd' Rimadmeng, Ghostly Thresher
Reg ïngizesmul, Ghostly Doctor Undead
Uucar Tobulurrith, Ghostly Doctor Undead
Olon Sazirrikkir, Ghostly Merchant Undead
Mafol Mengtath, Ghostly Merchant Undead
Thob Kadôlgoden, Ghostly Soldier Undead
Urdim Ustansazir, Ghostly Speardwarf Undead
Sakzul Sakzulekur, Ghostly Recruit Undead
Bomrek Emäthsodel, Ghostly Recruit Undead
Dakost Ukerkib, Ghostly Recruit Undead
Undead
Undead
Dodók ïtebendok, Ghostly Recruit Undead
```

SHUT UP ERIC WE KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE WORKING LIMBS

```
'Eric II'
injured.
'Eric II'
Kilruduvel, Head Stoneworker cancels Pickup Equipment: Too
injured.
'Eric II'
injured.
'Eric II'
Kilruduvel, Head Stoneworker cancels Pickup Equipment: Too
injured.
'Eric II'
Kilruduvel, Head Stoneworker cancels Pickup Equipment: Too
injured.
'Eric II'
Kilruduvel, Head Stoneworker cancels Pickup Equipment: Too
injured.
'Eric II'
Kilruduvel, Head Stoneworker cancels Pickup Equipment: Too
injured.
```

GOD

We have 24 living dwarves in the fort, the number of dorf ghosts is 3/4 of that. Lovely.

The first thing that happens? Dariush gives birth to a widdle baby, and we're now 1 dorf ahead of being overrun by ghosts. My first task as the overlord: Get rid of these fucking ghosts. My second task as the overlord: Bring this fort back to it's feet. AGAIN.

While trying to find what is what, I find out a lovely little thing. There's supposed to be a lever here connected to THE CRUSHER. The lever is gone.



What the fuck? Is this a trash compactor? No, too many bridges, this is a goblin crusher. Why is it connected to the outer world then? Wouldn't whoever is pulling this lever shit their pants the moment a weasel walks down the ramp and run away screaming?

Maybe it's better that this thing was destroyed by some benevolent soul. Regardless, I'll put down orders for replacing the lever and put it to some more sensible place.

On the 14th day of Opal, Rridgway II Lorbamònul made Standardmirrors the diorite throne.

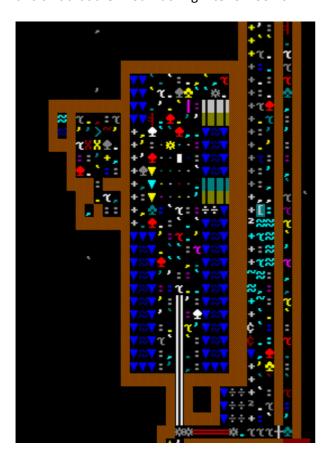
It is encircled with bands of diorite, and surrounded by an aura of mediocrity! I'm having more fun watching our cats fight each other. I don't even want to know who thought of this thing.



With Opal drawing close to it's end, I am taunted. By our own creations! A lever in the ROOM OF LEVERS is noted to use the entrance sealing mechanisms, but as far as I can tell, IT DOES NOTHING. Maybe it's not linked to the entrance I'm thinking of? Then what entrance does it link to? Oh for

fucks sake. I put down the order to add a whole new lever to fix this issue. Nebélarak the cassiterite mechanism will be the key to our victory, or downfall! Possibly both. Especially considering the number of mechanisms around here that seem to be linked to some mysterious machine or room full of either water or magma.

One such mystery room seems to be an indoor aquarium. I think it was SUPPOSED to be a power generator room, judging from the waterwheels, but the unfinished(or broken) axel section tells me that it is either a failed project, or one that never worked. There's a lot of shad in the waters though. It's a nice spot to relax at or take your kids fishing, when you want to get away from all the corpses and shit that are in our fucking interior rooms.



God damn, all these skeletons and skeletal remains. While work is being done to link those things I ordered(funny how fast that was put under work, maybe these guys actually want to live), I've begun to amuse myself by going through the levels on the fort in order to find and unforbid corpses that need moving. And there's a lot of 'em. From forgotten monsters, to dwarves. And... other things. God damn.

15th of Obsidian. With reports coming in about Reudh II's ghost toppling a bed, I've appointed Mantisman as our Burial expert for the time being. We have loads of empty coffins, and at least SOME of these god damn ghosts have to be appeased by having their earthly remains placed in 'em, right?

I also found a ballista that's aimed at a used staircase. In fact, from the stockpile that has one lone ballista bolt in it, I think this was actually planned to be used heavily. What the hell guys?



Ah, at the end of winter all the gobbos finally decided to turn and flee. And then were immediately replaced by ANOTHER siege group. Well, MAYBE ALL THOSE TRAPS WE HAVE WILL DO SOMETHING HUH? My official enemy count is: A whole lot. Note to self: Replace or at least forbid those cage traps at the start of our trap corridor. What the hell will we do with all these caged trolls huh? The good news are: Our trap corridor sent the enemy forces packing, after their heavy troll squad was chopped, smashed and stabbed apart. Now all we have to do is clean all the clogged traps and do something about those troll cages.

It's Spring now, the snow is falling, the skeletons are skulking about. And to rub it on a bit more, a hill titan made of snow has arrived, swinging it's magnificent dual tails about. Who cares, let it stay there with all the other huge piles of snow. We aren't in any short supply of that stuff after all.

```
Mishos

A gigantic blob composed of snow. It has two long, straight tails and it has an austere look about it. Beware its webs!
```

But alas, luck would not let us not be harassed by a ball of snow! With a mighty crash our impenetratable lockable front door shattered apart and the snowball rolled in, hellbent on breaking yet another of our impenetratable lockable doors!

So the military was given the orders to go and kill it. And then I found out that two of three soldiers had either mining or woodcutting as their offtime work, so they had nothing on. They had managed to put on pants by the time El Presidente ended up in a brief scuffle with the beast and Mantisman sprung from ambush to rescue our glorious leader.

```
Titan charges at The El Presidente!
         Titan collides with
residente is knocked
                                  The El Presidente!
    Hill Titan charges at The El Presidente!
    Hill Titan charges at The El Presidente!
    Hill Titan rushes by The El Presidente!
    Hill Titan charges at The
                                   El Preside
         Titan rushes by The El P
Titan charges at The El
    Hill Titan charges at The El President
    Hill Titan collides with The El Presidente!
          residente is knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Wrestler hacks The Hill Titan in the right tail from behind with her
+adamantine battle axe+, breaking away a piece of the tissue!
    Hill Titan charges at The El Presidente!
The El Presidente counterstrikes!
The El Presidente punches The Hill Titan in the body from behind with his left hand, breaking away half of the tissue!
```

What a glorious battle it was.

What's that my eyes see? Why, I'd never- MIGRANTS! THREE OF THEM!

Strategia is an expert on Engraving and Masonry, while The Master just said that "they're back". Conchobar, a talented axeman, was thrilled to hear that they'd once again get to serve in the military.

Then they saw the state of our militia, spat on the moss floor and said that she'd make men out of 'em.

Mid-Summer. 4 migrants arrived and everyone got indoors safely.

Not much has happened. I sealed a few spots that looked dangerous, FB or otherwise, the glass spider should now be perfectly contained in the magma pumps until we have enough manpower to take it out, another FB however found a steel door at a location that was dangerously close to a staircase that led to the fort, but it's now sealed as well.

THIS JUST IN

CAQUAT SHIBBI HAS BLED TO DEATH. No clue as to how it happened. Has some unhappy citizen committed a crime most foul!? Stay tuned!

My detective skills brought be the answer to the question everyone has been wondering about! It seems that on his way to train, Caquat took a shortcut, and opened a door that holds behind it a whole lot of magma. He bled to death soon after having been splashed by a few tiles of the stuff. That's our Captain!

End of summer. Humans arrived to trade, made it in as the herd of skelindeers was too busy goofing off in the distance. Trading away LOADS OF CRAP to make it obvious to migrants that HELLCANNON IS STILL GOING STRONG, COME ON IN ERRYONE!

AND RIGHT AFTER THAT A FORGOTTEN BEAST ARRIVES.

Turns out that the farmplot area had TWO TILES OPEN to the cavern that the beast used to swoop in, topple a farmplot and start making beef jerky out of a cat. IT IS BOCASH, THE ENORMOUS SCALY LADY BUG! BEWARE ITS DEADLY SPITTLE!

The Crystalline Scholars are ordered to move it like they mean it as the cat still is being used as a punching bag. First to arrive is Ogrin II. MantisMan is soon to follow, swooping in from ambush just in time to save Ogrin II from being bumrushed to oblivion. The killing blow comes from MantisMan, who swings his adamantine battle axe in an arc and bisects the monstrous creature in half.

Closing that god damn hole now, I can't believe it wasn't discovered earlier through surprise FB attacks. The cat survived the initial attack, but it's unlikely it'll survive it's injuries.

```
Såkzul îbmatlokum, Cat (Tame)
"Såkzul Sparkspear"

upper body
lower body
head
right front leg
left front leg
right front paw
left front paw
left front paw
left rear leg
right rear leg
right rear paw
left rear paw
```

Strategia IV is also busy being in a strange mood. It's either a mason mood, or an engraver mood. PLACE BETS NOW.

It was an engraver mood. Strategia IV joins our legion of horror-engravers, detailing down murders in the most accurate way possible!

```
Am Tudrug, "The Yawn of Vandalizing", a cassiterite bracelet

This is a cassiterite bracelet. All craftsdwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encircled with bands of cassiterite and rope reed fiber. This object is adorned with hanging rings of moss agate and menaces with spikes of clear tourmaline. On the item is an image of giant penguins in cassiterite. On the item is an image of Kadôl, the deity of fire and metals, depicted as a female dwarf in panda leather. Kadôl is contemplating.

On the item is an image of a quern in black-cap.

On the item is an image of Sedme Necrodust the hulking horror in heliodor. Sedme Necrodust is traveling. The artwork relates to the wandering of the hulking horror Sedme Necrodust in The Useless Frost in the midspring of 16. On the item is an image of shining suns in forgotten beast bone.

Weight: <1 Basic Value: 52800**
```

Mid-Autumn. 3 migrants arrive.

A High Master woodcutter/adequate miner/expert clothier/novice soldier.

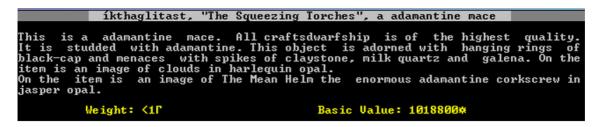
A high master animal dissector/novice miller&potash maker/skilled gem setter.

An adequate wood crafter/novice mason&metalsmith. I'm making this guy a metalcrafter. Got to make some fancy crap to sell to our dorf traders. Maybe we'd get bigger migrant waves then!

End of autumn. Traders arrive. THREE OF THEM! THREE! Oh well, they've must have had it as rough as this fort has had. While ordering finished good bins to be moved into the depot, I find out something. All the bins are made of lead. Oh dear lord. After a lot of emptying a few bins for extra dorfbucks, the traders leave with 21k of profit, and we end up with a lot of shit we didn't even really need. BUT WE NEED TO FOOL THOSE MIGRANT SCUM SOMEHOW!

As the merchants depart, cousac goes secretive and claims a magma forge. SCORE! AND YOU KNOW WHAT HE MAKES? A GOD DAMN ADAMANTINE MACE. Great, what a nice thing for him to do on my turn as Overseer, he makes a god damn wiffle bat that everyone will remember this reign by.

ENJOY THIS FINELY CRAFTED MS PAINT ARTWORK OF THE WEAPON OF GODLY POWER





TURN 16 - CATALYST PARADOX

Hellcannon

Catalyst's Tale

I did not return willingly.

Like shards of splintered rock embedded in my mind, the very walls of Hellcannon clung to the fragments of my consciousness, pulling me from the blissful oblivion of my madness. First the cats of the fortress took up a furious yowling. Next, three dwarves with no connection to one another all had the phrase "chorus of bones" become stuck in their heads, for no reason at all. Then the engravers, all at once, for no cause they could explain, all simultaneously engraved at different parts of the fortress perfectly identical images of cheese.

And suddenly I found myself in a body once again. I know it's owner was as surprised as I was, because he immediately went completely mad.

Poor fellow

```
`CatalystParadox' Kolgasol, Raving Loony

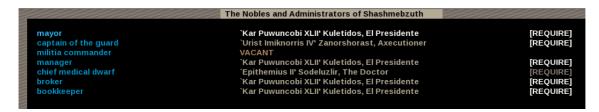
n : Customize Nickname, `CatalystParadox'

p : Customize Nickname, `CatalystParadox': Customize Profession Name, `Raving Loony'
```

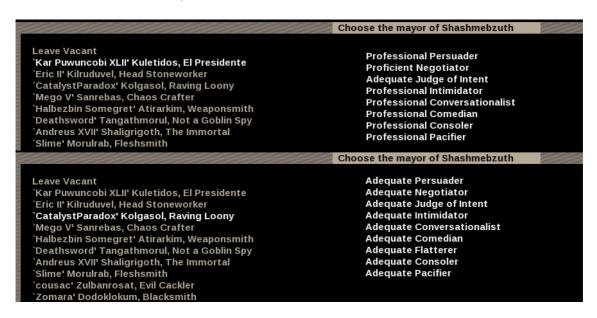
I can't say I blamed him. I wasn't too happy about the situation either. We spent the next week or so wandering the fortress aimlessly, chattering about... oh I believe it had something to do with flying kittens made of burning brass.

They said it would be a good year. What? They did.

When I finally collected myself a bit, and came to terms with being corporeal once more, for the first time in time without measure, I cast an eye to the heirarchy of the fort. It struck me as a bit... topheavy.



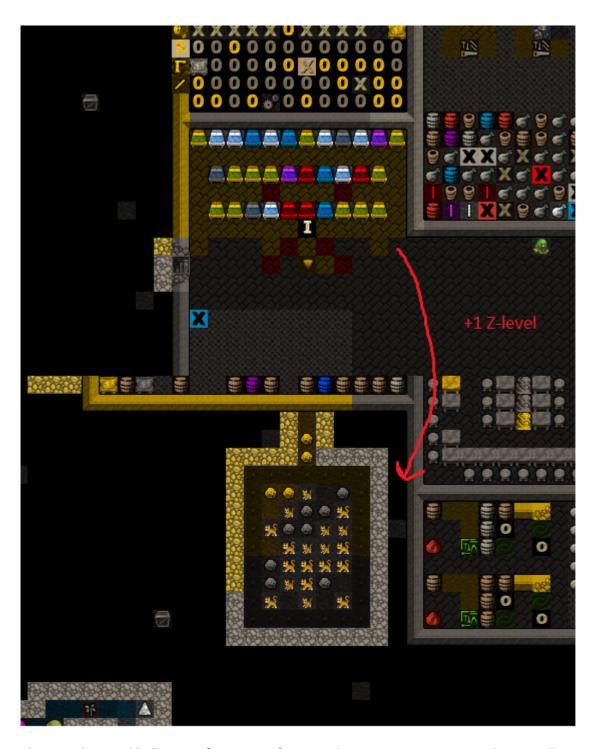
Poor fellow seemed burdened with so many responsibilities. Luckily with my talents it was all too easy to persuade the rest to vote me in to replace him, freeing him to focus on his other tasks - and I think I should make an adequate substitute!



The fortress itself paints a bleak picture... most of it seems to be one enormous mausoleum... perhaps even more so than Failcannon, at the end.



Other aspects were less depressing, and more simply bizarre. Here, there appears to be a platform, covered with cats, suspended over a row of hospital beds by a single support. I can only assume it is collapsed by one of the many unlabeled levers.



The scratching and bellowing of numerous forgotten beasts continue just outside our walls in many places, and the skeletal wildlife continually wander from above into our traps, but our defenses hold secure and the fort is in excellent shape. Meanwhile a vision lingers in my mind, an image I cannot shake from my earlier unexpected sojourn in the mind of queen Led. I can no longer tell if the impetus is my own or hers, but one thing is certain: I must build it.

The drafts are being laid as we speak.

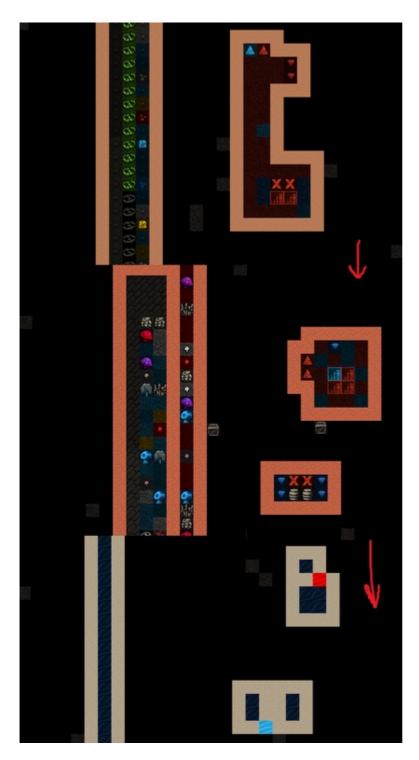


Soon.



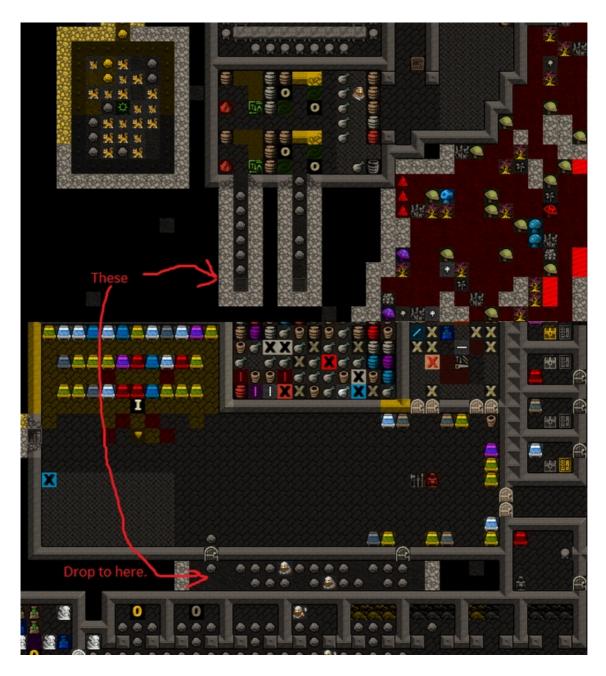
The secret project progresses apace. Those bridges you see on three sides are each linked to a single lever - when one goes up, the other goes down - thus the chamber will be accessible from one side only at any given time. Inside each chamber is a single rope, so an animal can be left as bait. The purpose of this will become clear in time. The central chamber is the control chamber - being filled with food, booze and other survival materials - as well as where the lever controls are being installed. The outer hallway winds slowly down into the earth.

Hitting the damn aquifer, though, is a frustration I would have preferred not to deal with, better engineers than I have left notes on how to proceed, and after a few abortive attempts, I think I am making progress.



I am not alone in this endeavor - the Overseers who have come before me have left their guidance as well, even if not written on paper blueprints, their designs and ambitions still resonate in these halls. I will see them brought to fruition... Oh my yes. I dare say the very purpose of Hellcannon itself will be fulfilled soon...

Lest you think I have been neglecting the fortress as a whole, I will have you know that in addition to correcting the hospital situation by assigning our resident doctors + two dedicated helpers to the best-equipped hospital space we have, I have also been implementing a minor project to keep our militia in fighting shape. As you can see from the diagram below...

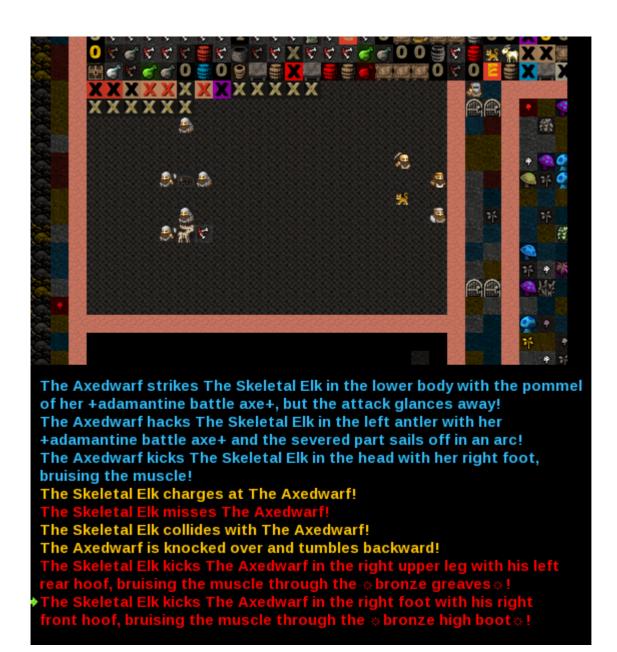


The Fun Pits can be used to provide **superb** training opportunities right in the comfort of the fortress! Of course... there seem to be a few kinks in the system. I'm honestly not quite sure what happened but when I sent for a skelk or two for our first trial...



I never thought I'd say this, but Failcannon really had better occupational safety standards.

Anyway, the military got their training, one way or another.



Now, what on earth is this thing that seems to have joined in the fight?



Where on earth did we get this menagerie, anyway? In any case, the militia did their job admirably.



Shortly thereafter, however, panic resumed. One fighter was on the scene... but sadly was quickly overwhelmed.

The Axecutioner hacks The Skeletal Elk in the head from behind with his -adamantine battle axe-, tearing apart the muscle!

The Axecutioner stands up.

The Axecutioner attacks The Skeletal Elk but She jumps away!

The Skeletal Elk charges at The Axecutioner!

The Skeletal Elk collides with The Axecutioner!

The Axecutioner is knocked over and tumbles backward!

Skeletal Elk kicks The Axecutioner in the head with he f, bruising the muscle and tearing apart the upper spir ue through the (horse leather hood)!

Axecutioner has become enraged!

The Axecutioner loses hold of the -adamantine battle axe-.

Skeletal Elk kicks The Axecutioner in the right upper arm with her front hoof, bruising the fat through the -bronze mail shirt-!
Skeletal Elk kicks The Axecutioner in the left eye with her left real for the bronze mail shirt-!

The Axecutioner pushes The Skeletal Elk in the left rear leg, but the attack glances away!

The Skeletal Elk kicks The Axecutioner in the head with her right front

♦hoof, bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and

The Axecutioner has been knocked unconscious!

`Urist Imiknorris IV' Zanorshorast, Axecutioner has been struck down.

When the others arrived, the threat was again quelled, but not before the forts most venerable cheesemaker, Strategia, was cornered and gored to death. Training was cancelled for the rest of the day.

```
The Eve Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the left front leg from behind
                                                                                                                 *adamantine spear*, tearing the muscle and chipping the middle spine's
                damantine spear*, chipping the bone
                                                                                                                A tendon in the middle spine has been torn!
The Eye Poker punches The Skeletal Elk in the right front hoof with her left hand, but the attack glances away!
A tendon has been torn!
The Eye Poker bashes The Skeletal Elk in the lower body from behind with the shaft of her *adamantine spear*, but the attack glances away!
The Eye Poker stands up.
The Eye Poker stands up.
                                                                                                                The Eye Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the right rear leg with her *adamantine spear*, chipping the bone!
The Eye Poker stands up.
The Eye Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the left rear leg with her
                                                                                                                 A tendon has been torn!
                                                                                                                 The Eye Poker kicks The Skeletal Elk in the upper body with her right
*adamantine spear*, chipping the bone!
A tendon has been torn!
                                                                                                                foot, bruising the muscle!
                                                                                                                 The Eye Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the right rear leg with her
A tendon has been torn!

The Eye Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the right rear hoof with her
*adamantine spear*, fracturing it!

The Eye Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the right rear hoof with her
*adamantine spear*, fracturing it!

The Eye Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the right rear hoof with her
                                                                                                                 *adamantine spear*, chipping the bone!
                                                                                                                A tendon has been torn!

The Eye Poker scratches The Skeletal Elk in the upper body, tearing the
                                                                                                                 The Eye Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the right front hoof with her
*adamantine spear* and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Eye Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the left rear hoof with her
*adamantine spear*, fracturing it
The Eye Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the upper body with her
                                                                                                             *adamantine spear*, fracturing it!

→ The Eye Poker stabs The Skeletal Elk in the left rear hoof with her
                                                                                                                *adamantine spear*, fracturing it!
```

Deathsword left some delightful artwork in my chambers. It leads me to believe the former mayor may not have been entirely popular... It's flattering to know I'm welcome, but seriously guys, I need to SLEEP here.

```
Engraved on the wall is an exceptionally designed image of Kar Puwuncobi Contained cloisters the dwarf and Kib Fordworked the Flowery Chamber of Canyons the dwarf by Strategia IV Bomrekinod Kar Puwuncobi Contained cloisters is making a plaintive artwork relates to the mortal wounding of the dwarf Kar Puwuncobi Contained Cloisters by the dwarf Kib Fordworked the Flowery Chamber of Canyons is striking a menacing pose The artwork relates to the mortal wounding of the dwarf Kar Puwuncobi Contained cloisters by the dwarf Kib Fordworked the Flowery Chamber of Canyons with a adamantine battle axe in The Useless Frost in the late spring of 213

**Locational Contained Cloisters**

**Locational Contained Cloisters**

**Locational Contained Cloisters**

**Locational Cloist
```

Migrants!



We had a couple of new arrivals, who miraculously managed to make it inside the fort in one piece no less. That, and one birth, minus the two deaths, puts the total current population at 34. (Is anyone in need of re-dorfing?)

A while later, some elves showed up to trade. They were not nearly so lucky as the migrants, and were ambushed by goblins from no less than three directions. There is something deeply ironic about an elf being filled with arrows by a goblin.



Now, in order to delve deeper and complete our new projects, I had told the population to ignore previous burrows orders. This had worked out marvelously until pointy-eared tree lovers showed up to get perforated and drop baskets full of their flowery hippy socks. Before I knew what was happening, everybody was **outside the bloody fort for some reason trying to gather the dropped**



I don't need to tell you, this was a bad thing.

However, by some small miracle I don't understand, everyone listened when I forbade them to touch the dropped goods, and ordered them to again retreat to burrows. Every soul in the fort rushed back inside - and the goblins were far enough behind that we didn't take so much as an injury. I never would have dreamed it could go so well.

I return my attention now to the project - the broadest strokes are beginning to take shape. I only hope I can settle the more intricate details before this opportunity is wrested from me by force or misfortune, by the machinations of mortals, Gods, or Led... or by the jealousies, or fear, of lesser minds. Already I hear them mutter amongst themselves - some may suspect my true purpose. I may need to take matters into my own hands - or if it comes to it - silence a few dissenting voices along the way.

Whatever else, it must be completed.

Work is continuing on the great Project quite nicely, and though I have managed to locate this "Checkerboard" my predecessors spoke of, I cannot fathom its use. I have already devised my own system, which grows nearer and nearer to readiness - we will see if the Checkerboard can be integrated someday - perhaps the combined result will be even greater than either Mego or I imagined.

Spring has grown into summer, and the summer has stretched long and relatively peaceful. Aside from a few meaningless rumblings in the deep, (and of course the endless combat reports from the fort's enormous cat population fighting each other - some of them have so much combat experience they seem to have actually earned bloody *titles*) months have passed without incident, allowing us to focus on our work.



Things have been so promising, in fact, I led a small team out to hastily complete the topside work necessary for the Great Project. We were almost finished when we had our first brush with the local wild-dead. Aussie and I made our getaway by dashing south, turning wide, then making for the traps in the hills. He's a quick one - in thought and on his feet - I am most impressed. The Skelks followed him to their doom and we got away easily.

Thinking we were safe, we returned to our work - but it was the next day that they came back in much greater numbers... and it would seem I cannot navigate around the exterior of this place. Even as I approached the trapped entrance and could have made it inside I veered away foolishly, panic having overridden my sense. Soon, I was surrounded...

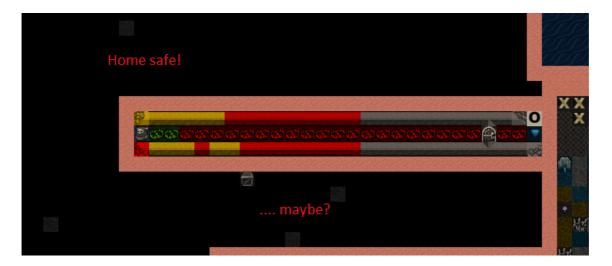


I should never have joined the crew to construct the topside of the project. I have been underground too long, and the sun-sickness kept me from evading the rampaging skelk that came for us. While the others made it safely inside, I weaved, disoriented and blinded, and wandered into the hills - soon surrounded.

Though managing to escape the first encounter with no serious injuries, I stumbled off in the wrong direction yet again, seeing the fort in the distance too late - only when the four beasts stood between it and me.



The brutalization of my tender mortal flesh was far from over - and after I had finally writhed free of their clutches and staggered around them toward the entrance, they managed to close to me once, twice more to kick my ribs and bowl me over. Wheezing blood in the snow and crawling, I thought I was finished—



The damn skelk followed me down, and I was too weak to get away. But I had one trick left up my sleeve, one plan, one masterstroke...

Go down fighting like a dwarf.

The Raving Loony pushes The Skeletal Muskox in the left rear leg, but the The Raving Loony pushes The Skeletal Muskox in the right rear leg, but The Raving Loony counterstrikes! ng Loony pushes The Skeletal Muskox in the left rear leg, but the attack glances away! The Raving Loony misses The Skeletal Muskox! The spinning {Isilver war hammerI} strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the left rear hoof, chipping it! The spinning {-silver war hammer-} strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the lower body, bruising the muscle! The spinning {silver war hammer} strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the right front leg, chipping the bone! The Raving Loony attacks The Skeletal Muskox but He jumps away! The spinning {silver war hammer} strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the right rear hoof, chipping it! The spinning {+silver war hammer+} strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the right rear leg, chipping the bone! The spinning {-silver war hammer-} misses The Skeletal Muskox!
The spinning {-silver war hammer-} strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the lower body, bruising the muscle! The Skeletal Muskox latches on firmly! The spinning (Isilver war hammeril) strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the left rear leg, chipping the bone! The spinning {"silver war hammer"} strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the right rear leg, chipping the bone!
The spinning {\(\mathcal{B}\) silver war hammer\(\mathcal{B}\) strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the The Raving Loony is unable to break the grip of The Skeletal Muskox's lower body, bruising the muscle! The Skeletal Muskox falls over.

My remaining arms may have been a useless limp thing on my torso, but I swung it anyway, and by Armok I connected. I fought that damn skelk as it made its way down the corridor, battering and goring me, even as it *bit me in the eyelid and shook me by it*... And I led the damn beast right into the traps.

I had but a moment to gasp for my breath - it wasn't coming easily, gurgle might be a better verb - when two more clattered down the ramp. I turned and staggered away from them, trying to escape - they were finished by the traps as well... but my vision faded, and went black.

Forge bronze Chain (20) has been completed.
`CatalystParadox' Kolgasol, Raving Loony's mandate has ended.
→ `CatalystParadox' Kolgasol, Raving Loony has suffocated.

Something of a setback.

There was a birth in the fort recently, and so it seems most ethical to cast out the infant's mind and replace it with my own. You may think this sounds monstrous, but the babe doesn't really have a personality at this point, so this is much more humane than doing so to a full-grown dwarf, I promise you! Additionally, the resilient young mind may help me recover from my... disorientation... from my encounter with Led's mind, my extended period of discorporation, and my more recent *abrupt* discorporation.

```
Zon Lirukzuntir has been quite content lately. She was disgusted by a miasma lately. She is the daughter of Dariush IV Pagesizzle and Ghills Shieldfactions. She is a worshipper of Etur the Silvers of Mining an ardent worshipper of Zefon and a dublous worshipper of Ertal the Jewels of Wandering. She is a citizen of The Rack of Amusing She is a member of The Mystery of Gods. She is three months old born on the 20th of Sandstone in the year 217. Her very long hair is neatly combed She is average in size. Her head is very short Her ochre eyes are slightly protruding. Her hair is saffron. Her skin is dark peed in the year of the Sandstone in the year 217. The short lare was a sell ghtly protruding. Her hair is saffron where skin is dark peed in the year of the protruding of the protruding she had been been as a sell ghtly protruding. Her hair is saffron where skin is dark peed in the year of the protruding she had been been been as a sell ghtly protruding. Her hair is saffron where she is a sellow bone the color pearlice crosses bucklers and plump helmets for their rounded tops. When possible she prefers to consume prickle berry wine. She absolutely detests bats. She has a deep well of patience a very good sense of the position of her own wing sense for music. She loves a good thrill. She has a fertile imagination. She appreciates art and she has a natural beauty. She is very straightforward with others. She is compassionate. She is organized. She winks when she is nervous. She needs alcohol to get through the working outdoors at least for a time.

A short sturdy creature fond of drink and industry.
```

Now then, while I'm acclimating to the new body, it seems as good a time as any to share with you what I have been working on. Especially since one of you cretins might need to use it now, instead of me. Curse these tiny hands!

Top level, just below the surface. I have shown you this part many times, but never explained.



At various points on the way down.



Deep in the magma sea... This is the most important part of all.



As it happens, the Checkerboard is just a stone's throw away and a z-level above. running that hallway from this and around a few bends into it would not be terribly difficult.

We got a few more migrants today. Among them was a metalworker who looked scrappy - he immediately picked up an abandoned axe and started following the militia (The Crystalline Scholars) around... so I guess we know what his profession will be. Seanhl, by name.

Speaking of the militia, the dwarves of the fort seem disinclined to follow my old standing orders about staying indoors where its safe... this damn "El Presidente" who immediately resumed his post seems to be too overworked to notice that no one is paying any attention to their burrows. So, the only thing to do was to confront the problem head on, and give our dwarves-in-arms a little field experience for the safety of the fort. MantisMan the axedwarf was the first on the scene - and took a bit of a beating in the fray, but with the others arriving shortly thereafter, the clattering menaces were soon laid to rest without any serious harm done.

No sooner was the militia back indoors and the workers again happily wandering outside for no good reason, however, when a large herd of skeletal reindeer crested the snowy horizon. Tasrak II and arcangelsd of course had wandered off to the south of the fort for no reason I can imagine, and thus ran directly into the herd. There was no way the militia would mobilize in time to reach them. Both were carrying picks - so they both immediately became honorary members of the Crystalline Scholars.

The Skeletal Reindeer Cow charges at The !!Nuclear!! Engineer!
The Skeletal Reindeer Cow collides with The !Nuclear!! Engineer!
The Skeletal Reindeer Cow collides with The !Nuclear!! Engineer!
The !Nuclear!! Engineer is knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Skeletal Reindeer Cow is knocked over and tumbles backward!
The Skeletal Reindeer Cow kicks The !!Nuclear!! Engineer in the left upper leg with her left rear hoof, bruising the muscle and tearing the upper spine's nervous tissue through the x[llama wool hood)x!
The !Nuclear!! Engineer in the lead with her right rear hoof, bruising the muscle and tearing the upper spine's nervous tissue through the x[llama wool hood)x!
The !Nuclear!! Engineer in the lower look with the right rear hoof, tearing apart the cartilage through the x[alpaca wool cloak]x!
The Skeletal Reindeer Cow kicks The !!Nuclear!! Engineer in the nose with her right rear hoof, tearing apart the cartilage through the x[alpaca wool cloak]x!
The Skeletal Reindeer Cow kicks The !!Nuclear!! Engineer in the lower body with her right from thoof, through the x[alpaca wool cloak]x!
The Skeletal Reindeer Cow kicks The !!Nuclear!! Engineer in the lower body with her right through the x[alpaca wool cloak]x!
The Skeletal Reindeer Engli looks trikes The Skeletal Reindeer Bull in the left front hoof with his (-bronze pick-) and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Skeletal Reindeer Bull in the left roar leg with his (-bronze pick-) and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Skeletal Reindeer Bull in the left roar leg with his (-bronze pick-), fracturing the bone!
A tendon has been torn!
The Skeletal Reindeer Bull collides with The Priest of Armok!
The Skeletal Reindeer Bull stokes The Priest of Armok that the right lower am with his right rear hoof, bruising the muscle, amming the right front hoof, bruisi

`MantisMan' Buketadil has become a Axedwarf.

`Arcangelsd II' Megidkol has become a Recruit.

`Tasrak II' Fikodstorlut has become a Recruit.

`Tasrak II' Fikodstorlut, Priest of Armok has been struck down.

`Arcangelsd II' Megidkol, !!Nuclear!! Engineer has been struck down.

MantisMan was again first on the scene -- by entirely too great a margin for her own good. She was soon pulverized by thrashing hooves.

Did I mention MantisMan was my mother? And you know how Dwarven mothers are about their babies, in combat?

Seanhl' Muthkatlor has become a Wrestler.

`Conchobar VI' Kegetherith has become a captain of the guard.

`MantisMan' Buketadil, Axedwarf has entered a martial trance!

`MantisMan' Buketadil, Axedwarf has left the martial trance.

The Forgotten Beast Cona Iminu Enira has come! A gigantic crocodile composed of amber. It has a pair of fan-like antennae and it has a bloated body. Beware its poisonous vapors!

`MantisMan' Buketadil, Axedwarf has been struck down.

`Catalyst' Lirukzuntir, Pint-Sized Psion has bled to death.

•Nish Cilobzagod, Ghostly Mason has risen and is haunting the fortress!

Siiiiiiiiiighhhhh

Morons.

Everyone is safe inside now. Well, everyone except me, of course, and the others who died. And Ogrin the Eye-poker, who was the next to arrive, a little too late, to save us, who died in combat with a Skelk.

The Skeletal Elk collides with The Eye Poker!

The Eye Poker is knocked over and tumbles backward!

The Skeletal Elk kicks The Eye Poker in the lower right back tooth with

her left rear hoof and the severed part sails off in an arc

The Skeletal Elk kicks The Eye Poker in the head with her right front hoof, bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing apart the brain!

The Eye Poker has been knocked unconscious!

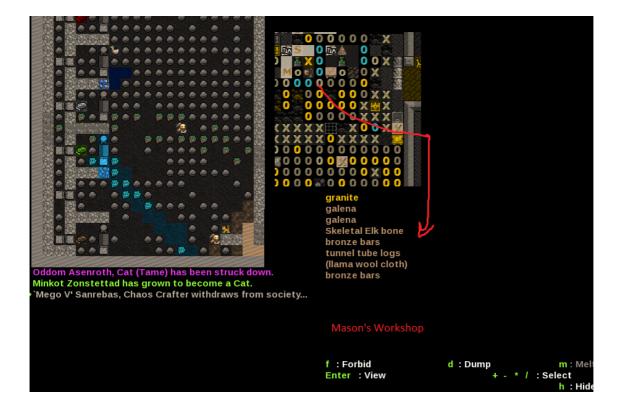
→ `Ogrin III' Ugoshshem, Eye Poker has been struck down.

But then everyone was safely contained inside, and work was able to continue. The Bridge-of-No-Backsies that Aussie described has now been built, and that section of the cannon awaits only a dwarven sacrifice to be finished. That, and the completion of the upper parts, of course. Work on those parts was stalling out badly, and grumblingly I shuffled through the minds of the fortress once more - dismissing this one as too frail, this one as too slow-witted, until I came upon one suitable. An animal dissector of very good intuition and empathy. His pysche even managed not to go screamingly insane when I merged with it!

Only just a little, instead.

```
Catalyst Locunastesh has been ecstatic lately He dined in a legendary dining room recently He has been annoyed by flies He had a wonderful drink lately He was woken by noise while sleeping lately He sleeping lately He recently He admired a very fine Support lately. He admired a fine sleeping lately He admired a very fine Support lately. He admired a fine taskefully arranged Slab lately He has been haunted by the dead lately He admired own fine Bed lately He has been haunted by the dead lately He is a worshipper of Lyk and a worshipper of Etur the Silvers of Mining William of the second of the seco
```

Hm. Not bad. I hope I can keep this one. Anyway, meanwhile, Mego was struck by his life's great inspiration, and seized a Mason's workshop and started to gather random shit all around the fortress.



The rein-dead herd outside killed someone's cat then finally wandered off, so I let a few dwarves out to try to finish the walls around the Hellcannon 'barrel'. Just as a mason, named Sigun (I almost took his body, in fact), was on his way out, he ran straight into an intruder on his way in!



So that went well.

Immediately following on the heels of that, we had a visit from some humans. Since the Hellcannon gates were still unfinished and open... well... they couldn't fit the wagons but they managed to find a creative entrance to the fortress regardless.

They have no idea what they are literally walking into.



I guess I will send someone to trade with them. We have more than enough, but it seems it has been a while since we had any new goods come into the fort - they may have something interesting.

And Mego finished his item. A rather nice throne if I do say so... I had it hauled to his chambers for him.



As I foresaw - the trading went smoothly, though it was unremarkable, and Autumn set in. Work on the Cannon continues apace - though a shortage of mechanisms is delaying the construction of the containment system. I have ordered more constructed immediately, which is going more slowly than I would like. As I also foresaw, there were several Goblin Ambushes waiting outside, and an approaching herd of Skelk - I left them for each other (several cats were casualties).

I also foresaw the lurking thieves in our upper stockpiles. There was a hint of irony in who it was to inadvertantly discover it, though.



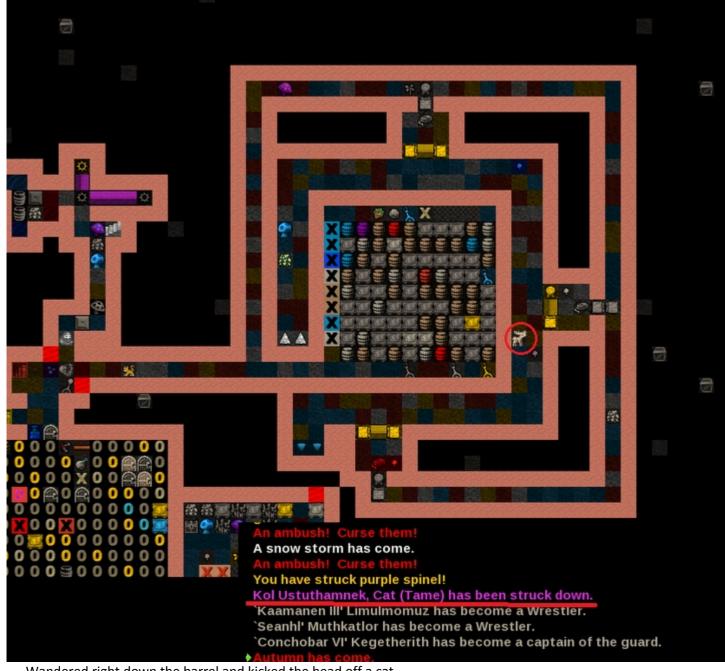
The interloper was allowed to run off unharmed - professional courtesy, perhaps?

Meanwhile, "El Presidente" Kar had a little party. Among our slaughterhouse animal pens, apparently.

Intresting venue...



What I did not foresee, was this:



Wandered right down the barrel and kicked the head off a cat.

I dispatched the military... gee, they've shrunk to three :-/ The battle was... I wish I could tell you it was epic. I want to sing the praises of these brave dwarves. The truth is closer to "Desperate."

The Wrestler scratches The Skeletal Elk in the upper body, tearing the muscle!

The Skeletal Elk charges at The Wrestler!

The Skeletal Elk misses The Wrestler!
The Skeletal Elk collides with The Wrestler!

The Wrestler is knocked over and tumbles backward!

al Elk strikes at The Wrestler but the shot is blocked! al Elk strikes at The Wrestler but the shot is blocked! al Elk strikes at The Wrestler but the shot is blocked!

The Wrestler stands up.

The Skeletal Elk charges at The Wrestler!

The Skeletal Elk misses The Wrestler!
The Skeletal Elk collides with The Wrestler!

The Wrestler is knocked over!

skeletal Elk kicks The Wrestler in the lower body with her left rear bruising the muscle and bruising the right kidney through the

© bronze greaves ©!

The Skeletal Elk kicks The Wrestler in the left lower arm with her right rear hoof, bruising the fat through the © bronze left gauntlet ©!

The Skeletal Elk strikes at The Wrestler but the shot is blocked!

The Wrestler counterstrikes!

The Wrestler misses The Skeletal Elk!

The Skeletal Elk collides with The Wrestler!

The Wrestler is knocked over!

The Skeletal Elk kicks The Wrestler in the left lower arm with her left rear hoof, shattering the bone through the \circ bronze left gauntlet \circ ! The Skeletal Elk strikes at The Wrestler but the shot is blocked!

The Wrestler counterstrikes!

The Wrestler misses The Skeletal Elk!

The Wrestler gives in to pain.

keletal Elk kicks The Wrestler in the head with her left rear ho ng the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and teari

Seanhl' Muthkatlor, Wrestler has been struck down.

The poor new recruit, heady with enthusiasm for his first real battle, was the first on the scene. He clearly had no idea what he was in for, as he barely got in a first blow before the damn skelk bowled him over. He at least delayed it until Kaamanen arrived. Sorry Seanhl...

Skeletal Elk kicks The Architect of Vengeance in the right lower arm her right front hoof, bruising the fat through the [bronze right]

The Architect of Vengeance is no longer stunned.

The Architect of Vengeance stands up.

The Skeletal Elk charges at The Architect of Vengeance!

The Skeletal Elk collides with The Architect of Vengeance!

The Architect of Vengeance is knocked over and tumbles backward!

Skeletal Elk kicks The Architect of Vengeance in the left upper leg her left rear hoof, bruising the bone through the *bronze mail

Skeletal Elk attacks The Architect of Vengeance but She scrambles

The Architect of Vengeance stands up.

The Skeletal Elk charges at The Architect of Vengeance!

The Skeletal Elk collides with The Architect of Vengeance!
The Architect of Vengeance is knocked over and tumbles backward!

The Architect of Vengeance is no longer stunned.

The Architect of Vengeance stands up.

The skelk kept the same momentum when Kaamanen arrived. It was not looking good... But Kaamanen is a resilient old bastard.

The Architect of Vengeance stands up.

The Architect of Vengeance hacks The Skeletal Elk in the right rear leg from behind with her +adamantine battle axe+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The Architect of Vengeance punches The Skeletal Elk in the upper body from behind with her left hand, but the attack glances away!

The Architect of Vengeance hacks The Skeletal Elk in the tail from behind with her +adamantine battle axe+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The Architect of Vengeance kicks The Skeletal Elk in the head from behind with her right foot, bruising the muscle!

The Architect of Vengeance hacks The Skeletal Elk in the head from behind with her +adamantine battle axe+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The Architect of Vengeance stands up.

And finally getting his moment, he seized it well - ending the fight with surprising alacrity. If those two had just arrived at the same time, I think they might have both lived, and even been fine. I will make a mental note to increase the size of the military if I am ever able.

During this, a child had for whatever reason followed them in. I am... impressed by it's tenacity, if not it's intelligence. Future recruit that one... if it lives.

The Skeletal Elk charges at The Dwarven Child!

The Skeletal Elk collides with The Dwarven Child!

The Dwarven Child is knocked over and tumbles backward!

e Skeletal Elk kicks The Dwarven Child in the upper body with her left ont hoof, bruising the muscle and bruising the right lung! se Skeletal Elk kicks The Dwarven Child in the left upper arm with her wht rear hoof, bruising the fat!

The Dwarven Child is no longer stunned.

keletal Elk misses The Dwarven Child! keletal Elk kicks The Dwarven Child in the right lower arm with her ar hoof, shattering the bone!

The Dwarven Child stands up.

The Skeletal Elk attacks The Dwarven Child but She jumps aw

The Skeletal Elk charges at The Dwarven Child!

s The Dwarven Child but She jumps awa

The Skeletal Elk charges at The Dwarven Child!

Skeletal Elk kicks The Dwarven Child in the lower body with her left hoof, bruising the muscle and bruising the stomach!

The Skeletal Elk collides with The Dwarven Child!

The Dwarven Child is knocked over and tumbles backward!

Skeletal Elk kicks The Dwarven Child in the left upper leg with her t front hoof, bruising the muscle!
Skeletal Elk kicks The Dwarven Child in the head with her left rear f. bruising the fat!

The Dwarven Child gives in to pain.

The Skeletal Elk kicks The Dwarven Child in the head with her left front hoof, bruising the muscle and shattering the skull!

NOT YET DEAD!!!!!

I hope it wasn't Kaamanen's... but I am afraid it may have been. Actually, that would be rather poetic - the child came and distracted the beast for the critical moment it took for Kaamanen to recover, and finish the creature off... Sadly it was to be short-lived.

The Skeletal Muskox kicks The Architect of Vengeance in the left lower arm with her left front hoof, bruising the skin through the bronze left gauntlet:

The Skeletal Muskox kicks The Architect of Vengeance in the left lower arm with her left rear hoof, bruising the skin through the \(\text{lbronze} \) bronze left gauntlet\(\text{ll}! \)

The Skeletal Muskox charges at The Architect of Vengeance!
The Skeletal Muskox attacks The Architect of Vengeance but She jumps
away!

The Skeletal Muskox slams into an obstacle and falls over!

The Skeletal Muskox grabs The Architect of Vengeance by the [bronze right gauntlet] with her right front leg!

The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the lower body from the side with her +adamantine battle axe+, tearing apart the muscle!
The Skeletal Muskox releases the grip of The Skeletal Muskox's right

The Skeletal Muskox releases the grip of The Skeletal Muskox's right front leg on The Architect of Vengeance's 🛭 bronze right gauntlet 🗈 .

The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the right front leg from the side with her +adamantine battle axe+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The Revengineer bites The Skeletal Muskox in the right rear hoof from the side, but the attack glances away!

The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the left rear leg from the side with her +adamantine battle axe+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The Skeletal Muskox kicks The Architect of Vengeance in the head with her right rear hoof, bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing apart the brain!

'Kaamanen III' Limulmomuz, Architect of Vengeance has been struck down.

The arrival of a second undead beast on the scene spelled the end for the greivously injured Kaamanen as well... At least he went down fighting, and took several of the skoxes limbs with him. At this point Conchobar arrived (really guys? are you taking turns? We need to have a talk about squad tactics and timing).

`Kaamanen III' Limulmomuz, Architect of Vengeance has been struck down.

The Revengineer strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the upper body from the side with the pommel of her +adamantine battle axe+, but the attack glances away!

The Revengineer bites The Skeletal Muskox in the head from the side, tearing the muscle!

The Revengineer latches on firmly!

The Revengineer punches The Skeletal Muskox in the left front leg from the side with her left hand, but the attack glances away!

The Skeletal Muskox breaks the grip of The Revengineer's upper front tooth on The Skeletal Muskox's head.

The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the upper body with her +adamantine battle axe+, tearing apart the muscle!

+adamantine battle axe+, tearing apart the muscle!
The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the tail with her

+adamantine battle axe+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the upper body with her
+adamantine battle axe+, tearing apart the muscle and shattering the
middle spine's bone!

A tendon in the middle spine has been torn!

The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the upper body with her +adamantine battle axe+, tearing apart the muscle!

The Revengineer punches The Skeletal Muskox in the right rear leg with her left hand, but the attack glances away!

The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the right rear leg with her +adamantine battle axe+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The Skeletal Muskox misses The Revengineer!

The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the left front hoof with her +adamantine battle axe+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!

The Revengineer strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the lower body with the pommel of her +adamantine battle axe+, but the attack glances away!

▶The Revengineer kicks The Skeletal Muskox in the head with her left foot, bruising the muscle!

Also...

The Skeletal Muskox kicks The Dwarven Child in the head with her right rear hoof, bruising the muscle, jamming the skull through the brain and tearing the brain!

Dumat Kadolgakiz, Dwarven Child has been struck down.

What he lacked in punctuality, he made up for in ferocity.

```
The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the tail with her
+adamantine battle axe+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Revengineer strikes The Skeletal Muskox in the right rear hoof with
the pommel of her +adamantine battle axe+, but the attack glances away!
The Revengineer kicks The Skeletal Muskox in the upper body with her
right foot, bruising the muscle!
                             The Stray war Grizzly Bear attacks The Skeletal Muskox but She jumps
                            ▶away!
                             The Stray war Grizzly Bear bites The Skeletal Muskox in the lower body
                             from the side, tearing the muscle!
                             The Stray war Grizzly Bear latches on firmly!
                             The Skeletal Muskox breaks the grip of The Stray war Grizzly Bear's tooth
                             from The Skeletal Muskox's lower body!
                             The Stray war Grizzly Bear bites The Skeletal Muskox in the head, tearing
                             the muscle!
                             The Stray war Grizzly Bear latches on firmly!
                             The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the lower body with her
                             +adamantine battle axe+, tearing apart the muscle!
                             The Stray war Grizzly Bear scratches The Skeletal Muskox in the upper
                             body, tearing the muscle!
                             The Skeletal Muskox stands up.
                             The Revengineer punches The Skeletal Muskox in the head with her left
                             hand, bruising the muscle!
                             The Stray war Grizzly Bear charges at The Skeletal Muskox!
                             The Stray war Grizzly Bear bites The Skeletal Muskox in the left front
                             leg!
                             A tendon has been torn!
The Stray war Grizzly Bear collides with The Skeletal Muskox!
They tangle together and tumble forward!
The Revengineer hacks The Skeletal Muskox in the left rear leg with her
+adamantine battle axe+ and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Stray war Grizzly Bear bites The Skeletal Muskox in the left front
hoof, but the attack glances away!
 The Stray war Grizzly Bear bites The Skeletal Muskox in the left front
leg!
A tendon has been torn!
The Stray war Grizzly Bear latches on firmly!
The Stray war Grizzly Bear charges at The Skeletal Muskox!
 The Stray war Grizzly Bear bites The Skeletal Muskox in the left front
 A tendon has been torn!
 The Stray war Grizzly Bear collides with The Skeletal Muskox!
 They tangle together and tumble forward!
 The Revengineer punches The Skeletal Muskox in the left rear hoof with
 her left hand, but the attack glances away!
 The Revengineer punches The Skeletal Muskox in the head with her right
 hand, bruising the muscle!
The fight spilled out of the cannon and into the stockpiles - and the tide seemed to be turning against
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The fight spilled out of the cannon and into the stockpiles - and the tide seemed to be turning against the lone Conchobar - only survivor of the militia at this point - when he received help from an unexpected.... bear.

Is that the same bear again? I might make it a general. Together they laid the damn skox to rest, and peace was restored, for now. Population: 25

So the Hellcannon has received it's first blood sacrifices... sooner than planned. I... I think...

I think it grows hungry.

I swear I can hear the echoes of faint thoughts from it's chambers, the stirrings of some primordial, malevolent sentience....

And I long to know more.

DIG DEEPER YOU BASTARDS. The Hellcannon will be completed if it costs us every life in the fort...

Catalyst stalks about the fort muttering to himself, glowering at the walls and anyone he comes across.

Oh... crapping carp.

Look what just arrived:

The lise Bullifoware

A huge three-eyed humming bird It has large mandibles and it undulates rhythmically Its goldenrod feathers are long and sparse Beware its poisonous bite!

And look where it is:



I... have no idea how it got in. I thought the caverns were thoroughly sealed away. In any case, we have 25 dwarves, and a military of one, no others qualified. I'm trying to find a way to just seal off that area of the fort, but I CAN'T EVEN FIND MY WAY AROUND.

Maybe I'll lock everyone in the Hellcannon.

I assure you, everything is fine.



With the bird buzzing about in our basement, I rounded up a team of volunteers to bravely sacrifice-themselves for defend the fortress. As I am waiting for them to gather their equipment and rally for their charge, I scan the fortress quickly... and notice for the first time a dwarven corpse rotting (forbidden for some reason) in the STILL STALLED aquifer breach. What a mess... There is no time to contemplate this, however, as suddenly a goat and a cat are 'struck down' in two completely seperate parts of the fortress - by a rampaging hummingbird, no doubt.

The beast slaughters a cow next, but then it is engaged by a black bear and a vulture, which both managing to both get a grip on it with their teeth! GO! EAT IT, IT TASTES LIKE CHICKEN! It will be enough to slow it down and distract it for a little while, at least. The troops aren't rallied yet - but I give the order to engage anyway. The bird finishes off the vulture and becomes preoccupied slaughtering cats atop the strange suspended platform I noticed earlier. At least it will be busy a while.



on The Stray Cat's second right front toe.

The Forgotten Beast releases the grip of The Forgotten Beast's right wing on The Stray Cat's left front paw.

The Forgotten Beast charges at The Stray Cat!

The Forgotten Beast attacks The Stray Cat bu The Forgotten Beast rushes by The Stray Cat!

The Forgotten Beast charges at The Stray Cat!

The Forgotten Beast charges at The Stray Cat!

The Forgotten Beast rushes by The Stray Cat!

The Forgotten Beast charges at The Stray Cat!

The Stray Cat counterstrikes!

The Stray Cat bites The Forgotten Beast in the lower body from behind, denting the skin!

The Stray Cat latches on firmly!

The Forgotten Beast rushes by The Stray Cat!

The Leopard (Tame) has suffocated.

The Stray Cat scratches The Forgotten Beast in the left wing, tearing the skin and bruising the muscle!

The Forgotten Beast stands up.

The Stray Cat scratches The Forgotten Beast in the right foot, tearing the skin and bruising the muscle!

The Stray Cat scratches The Forgotten Beast in the lower body, denting

The Stray Cat scratches The Forgotten Beast in the left foot, denting the

The Forgotten Beast stands up.

Forgotten Beast grabs The Stray Cat by the head with its

The Stray Cat is unable to break the grip of The Forgotten Beast's right wing on The Stray Cat's head!

The Forgotten Beast releases the grip of The Forgotten Beast's right wing on The Stray Cat's head.

The Forgotten Beast charges at The Stray Cat!

Something has emptied a cage!

abbro Statue toppled by Thelise Bulifoware, Forgotten Beast.

`Eric II' Kilruduvel has become a Recruit.

`Deathsword' Tangathmorul has become a Recruit.

`ThatAussieDwarf' Eralonol has become a Recruit.

`Gizogin VI' Ardesnish has become a Recruit.

diorite Cabinet toppled by Amost Ingishonshen, Ghostly Merchant.

Thilkut Thidaslolor, Billy Goat (Tame) has been struck down.

Kib Kabkib, Cat (Tame) has been struck down.

The Stray Cow (Tame) has been struck down.

The Vulture (Tame) has bled to death.

The Stray Black Bear (Tame) has been struck down.

The Stray Cat (Tame) has bled to death.

The Leopard (Tame) has suffocated.

In response to the order to attack, Aussie just scurries off, the coward. Conchobar goes in alone - Eric is limping behind but is very slow. But surely Conchobar - the sole survivor of the old militia - is more than up to the task of killing this one bird. Or not.

This is why you don't fight next to the magma forges:



The Forgotten Beast charges at The Revengineer!

The Forgotten Beast misses The Revengineer!

The Forgotten Beast collides with The Revengineer!

The Revengineer is knocked over and tumbles backward!

The Forgotten Beast grabs The Revengineer by the bronze mail:

its right wing!
The Forgotten Beast releases the grip of The Forgotten Beast's right wing

on The Revengineer's bronze mail shirt.

The Revengineer is no longer stunned.

The Forgotten Beast misses The Revengineer!

The Revengineer stands up.

The Forgotten Beast charges at The Revengineer!

The Forgotten Beast misses The Revengineer!

The Forgotten Beast collides with The Revengineer!

The Revengineer is knocked over and tumbles backward!

The Forgotten Beast grabs The Revengineer by the fifth toe, right foot with its left wing!

The Forgotten Beast releases the grip of The Forgotten Beast's left wing on The Revengineer's fifth toe, right foot.

The Forgotten Beast bites The Revengineer in the left upper leg, bruising the muscle through the -bronze mail shirt-!

The Revengineer is no longer stunned.

The Forgotten Beast attacks The Revengineer but She rolls away!

The Revengineer slams into an obstacle!

The Revengineer is caught in a pool of magma!

The Revengineer is caught in a pool of magma

The Revengineer is caught in a pool of magma!

The Revengineer is caught in a pool of magma!

Then Eric arrives - not yet fully transitioned to his Recruit status - and soon suffers the same fate.

The Forgotten Beast grabs The Head Stoneworker by the thumb, left hand with its left wing!

The Forgotten Beast releases the grip of The Forgotten Beast's left wing on The Head Stoneworker's thumb, left hand.

The Forgotten Beast attacks The Head Stoneworker but He rolls away!

The Head Stoneworker attacks The Forgotten Beast but It jumps away!

The Forgotten Beast attacks The Head Stoneworker but He scrambles away The Forgotten Beast bites The Head Stoneworker in the left upper arm,

tearing apart the muscle!

A motor nerve has been severed!

The Head Stoneworker bites The Forgotten Beast in the lower body, tearing the skin and bruising the fat!

The Head Stoneworker latches on firmly!

The Forgotten Beast breaks the grip of The Head Stoneworker's upper front tooth on The Forgotten Beast's lower body.

The Forgotten Beast grabs The Head Stoneworker by the fourth toe, right foot with its left wing!

The Forgotten Beast releases the grip of The Forgotten Beast's left wing on The Head Stoneworker's fourth toe, right foot.

The Head Stoneworker kicks The Forgotten Beast in the left foot with his right foot, bruising the fat!

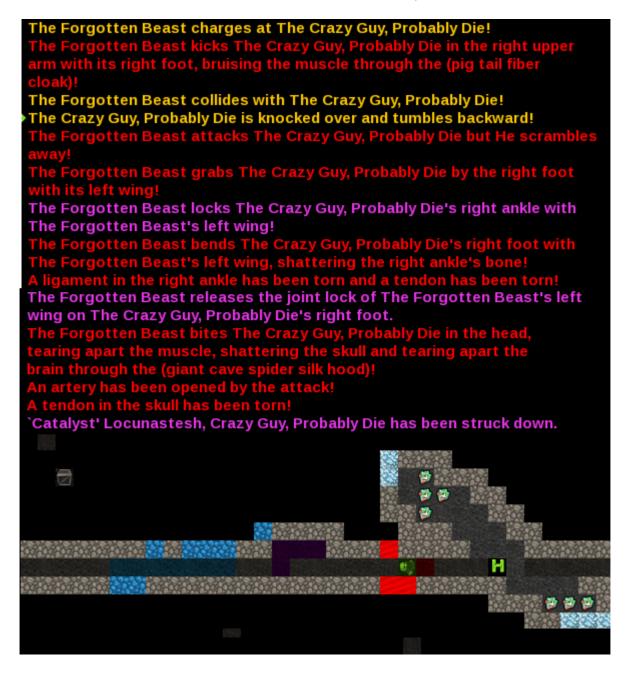
The Forgotten Beast attacks The Head Stoneworker but He scrambles away The Head Stoneworker slams into an obstacle!

The Head Stoneworker is caught in a nool of magmal

The Head Stoneworker is caught in a pool of magma!

The Head Stoneworker is caught in a pool of magma!

Clearly, I must take matters into my own hands - even if I have no combat skills and all I can do is attract its attention and lead it through the fort. Yes... That was my intention in wandering down and getting attacked by it, I promise you... Alright honestly I have no idea what I was thinking. But I dashed to the stairs with it hot in pursuit - and managed to lead it down to the mines. Then its long, needle-like beak and cruel mandibles closed around the back of my neck, and I felt no more.



I immediately claimed a new body, naturally. I'll put it to better use than it's former occupant anyway. I intend to sacrifice this one breaching Hell.... What do you mean by that, "no regard for waste of life?" Nonsense! I have the highest regard for the lives of my fellow dwarves - there are so many wonderful things you can spend them on!

I had hoped that the bird would get lost in the mine tunnels - and so it seemed it had, for a moment. But then Kar wanders by obliviously - and of course the beast gives chase.... but miraculously, only for a moment before Kar slips away! The bird goes back to standing around staring at a wall, and all seems to be well. But then one of Ledi's damn CATS attracts its attention, and runs straight at Kar

when it gives chase.

HOLY SHIT and Kar decapitates it like it's no big deal. I HAD NO IDEA HE EVEN HAD COMBAT SKILLS! . .. SWEET ARMOK HE DOESN'T

The Forgotten Beast grabs The Cat by the right front paw with its left The Cat misses The Forgotten Beast! The Forgotten Beast charges at The Cat! Forgotten Beast bites The Cat in the right rear leg, tearing apart The Forgotten Beast collides with The Cat! The Cat is knocked over and tumbles backward! The El Presidente hacks The Forgotten Beast in the left lower leg with his adamantine battle axe, tearing apart the muscle! An artery has been opened by the attack and many nerves have been severed! The Forgotten Beast falls over. Forgotten Beast kicks The Cat in the upper body with its right foot, sing the muscle and bruising the heart! The Cat is propelled away by the force of the blow! The El Presidente hacks The Forgotten Beast in the right foot with his adamantine battle axe and the severed part sails off in an arc! The El Presidente scratches The Forgotten Beast in the upper body, tearing the fat and bruising the muscle! st grabs The El Presidente by the X(sheep wool right The El Presidente hacks The Forgotten Beast in the head with his adamantine battle axe and the severed part sails off in an arc!

We grow ever closer to the time we can arm the Hellcannon. Aussie starts making some of the final linkages. Mego (finally) continues the aquifer project. While the aquifer breach is being finished up, DevilEd III the Thief is taken by a fey mood and claims a magma forge.

Meanwhile, outside, a random human hammerman is engaged in a feirce battle with some skeindeer. He does pretty well until he's gored in his maul-hand. Looks like he bought his caravan enough time to escape though - brave man. This provides enough distraction that when Seanhl - a lone migrant - arrives, she can make it to the entrance of the fort... where she immediately runs into a skeletal polar bear. I try to open the Hellcannon for her...and it works! Seanhl is safely inside, and the gate is re-sealed.



Noises from the deep... This one is nowhere it can do us harm though.

The Forgotten Beast Uthimi has come! A towering hairy scorpion. It has a pair of spindly antennae and it is slavering. Its teal hair is patchy. Beware its poisonous sting!

Press Enter to close window

A caravan and trade liaison come and go. Kar acquires some interesting delicacies, some lobsters and turtle for shells, and some extra thread, glass and metals and other crafting materials, but nothing too noteworthy. The cannon is progressing extremely well, almost all the links have been made, I've built in a few more interesting features and protections, and even the aquifer breach is almost done. In the midst of all this I didn't notice that DevilEd III did not have the materials he needed. In my defense, we probably couldn't have done anything for him anyway.

With no real effort, Gizogin puts him down like the mad dog he is.

The Thief charges at The Gander!
The Thief attacks The Gander but He jumps away!
The Resident Badass stabs The Thief in the head with her *adamantine spear*, tearing the muscle, shattering the skull and tearing the brain through the (Ilama wool hood)!
A tendon in the skull has been torn!
The Thief has been knocked unconscious!
DevilEd III' Alathbasen, Thief has been struck down.

So close. So close... The Hellcannon was almost finished. The final linkage was being made. The aquifer was half walled-away. Everything seemed to be in order - though no one could reach the cats to present them as bait. And then I heard the screech from the deep.

I don't know where and how the caverns were breached - but another beast found its way in - this one a gigantic spider composed of clear glass. I saw no option but to dispatch the militia - I thought we would be okay - it was already cracked and shattered in many places. I was wrong.

The creature lurked in the abandoned Checkerboard Mego created - Seanhl was the first on the scene, and thus the first to fall. I'm afraid I won't share the details with you - it was over quickly... there is little to say about it. He was followed by Gizogin, who managed to land a single stab, cracking it's foot - before he too was quickly laid low. Poor Slime wandered by and his blood soon decorated the checkerboard.

Aussie, for reasons unknown, (I can only presume this was part of some plot of his) then showed up and charged the creature. After managing to PUNCH the damn thing a few times, he too was slain (or so he *wants* us to think!!!)

Meanwhile a seige arrived, but I paid little attention. Imagine my surprise when they managed to break into the fort.



It was time for desperate measures. The project was ready - or nearly so - and it was time I went to arm it. Perhaps it was extreme, but surely if used cleverly the Hellcannon could save us from this mess.

Down, down into the earth all alone I sent my sacrificial thrall – copper pick in hand...



Hell was breached.

UNLEASH THE TERROR FROM THE DEEP!





Their numbers were ludicrous - far more than I have listed above. I turned and fled as quickly as my legs would carry me, back into the main chamber of the Cannon - roiling clouds of ash and flame spewing forth behind me. They closed on me and soon I felt their savage blows rain down on my back - but I had achieved my purpose - I had led them just where I wanted them...

It was then I noticed the lone bait-chamber - the final linkage of the project - abandoned partway through and gaping open. ???

The last thing I saw before the world went dark were the salt-beasts tramping through the abandoned blocks and mechanisms into the maintenance tunnel of the Hellcannon - and I knew all my efforts had been for naught.

Journal of Queen Led - Parasite in Catalyst's Mind

At last, my darlings roam free! Finally I can stop hiding in that insipid creature's mind, now that she has served her purpose.

Where did she think the sudden increase of her psychic powers came from, anyway? Practice? Hah! Any dwarf with half a brain would have known I was behind it all along... If any such dwarves existed to begin with, that is.

The Hellcannon is complete - and working exactly as *I* always intended. Soon my army will be loose on the world, and none shall stand before the devastation!

All according to plan...

TURN 17 - ARCANGELSD

Brace thyselves, an anticlimax is coming.

Metaphysical Log of Dead Engineer arcangelsd

It was totally not worth it. I knew that going back from a happy afterlife to have a look at HellCannon wasn't going to pay off. But I did. Curiosity won at the end.

So well, I came back to this aptly named hellhole, what I did found? That it had become a LITERAL hellhole, that is. So after I composed myself, I found that the one responsible for all this, CatalystParadox, had just died. Hoo boy he did get scot-free off this situation.

I hijacked someone's mind and started yelling people and urging them to build walls blocking several passageways. Unfortunately, those numbskulled bastards were too busy carrying shit for one place to another, so I told them to cancel every other labor they were allowed to do, and start building walls for all that's worth it. Worried, I looked for the demons. Surprisingly, upon finding them, I didn't feel any fear. I suppose it's related to the fact that the parts of me that made me feel fear rotted away a long time ago. Whatever. Back to the demons, they were busy killing an ogre down in the middle of the magma sea. Wait, what. What the hell is doing a skogre there? Screw it, it's buying us some precious time.

I went back to the walls, in order to check the progress. Everything was done, save a glaring hole that went down to the panic room. I possessed Catalyst's mind again, and asked for the reason why those walls weren't being built. Someone that I haven't met before said "Lad, you told us to build walls quick, and the nearest building material to 'dis place is bronze, but you told us to build them with stone, so we can't build those walls because they ain't planned for being made from stone". What. Frustrated, I ordered those walls to be built from stone, and then left to check for more possible ways inside our fortress. While I was on it, I saw TAD running around with a pile of clothes and thread, but for some reason, when I saluted him, he ran away like I was the devil. Funny bloke, this TAD. Must be plannin' one of his obscure antics, or something like that.

Again, I came back to the forges, to oversee the progress, only to find that the works had progressed in the incredibly amount of... nothing. "Weird noises down the magma chute are scaring the workers off" they said. HOLY ARMOK MAGMA IS A HIGH DENSITY LIQUID HOW DOES THAT HAPPEN. I ordered them to get away, because I could feel the demons getting close. Advantages of being a supernatural entity, I guess. I drove my vessel up the stairs. He was feeling increasingly agitated. Maybe I should leave him alone, before he goes nuts. Speaking of going nuts, Deathsword is running up&down the stairs, half-naked, with a pick in his hands, and a miserable look on his face. I should look after him soon, before some calamity happens.

I sailed from my vessel, and went to the magma forges. Well, the ex-magma forges, now "demon party hall". Did I mention that it's completely in fire? I had no idea that lead could catch fire. Oh, now they are on the third cavern level, and just killed all the FBs down there. I'll give them a medal later. They also set fire to the ENTIRE cavern, but hey, no more FBs. Then, I got the feeling of some living entity in heavy pain. I rushed there, only to find some fire demons ripping apart a cat. A cat that is currently near a staircase that leads to the insides of the fortress. WHY MR. PUSSYWHISKHERS, WHY? WHAT HAVE WE DONE TO YOUhey, where are those demons going? Another cat? Why those parts of the fortress are seemingly flooded with cats? Well, fortunately those brickheads managed to seal that last passage in time.

To sum it up: we opened Hell, we lost our forges, the third cavern level, a panic room and two cats. Fair trade.

A few days later, I noticed the presence of an exceptional individual: Kar Puwuncobi, The Glorious President, of which were being told rumors of being completely immortal. I decided to test them. I'll give him the best armor and weapons that HellCannon has ever made, and train him in the secret

dwarven way of the "danger room".

On other unrelated news, I found a isolated bridge over an hospital that is full of cats standing on it. That would explain why La Loca de los Gatos keeps saying that she had new friends, despite being a baby.

Well, that's what I have done in this place for now. Maybe I'll be around there a little more. That hilariously big room of levers is surprisingly attractive. I may do something with it. For science, of course.

So we started the works in the shooting gallery. You know, to blow off steam, all the lads here seem to need some chillin' while taking potshots at demons. Given the historial of this fortress, it seems like the most appropriate pastime.

Sadly, when Deathsword was going to give it the final touch, something went up in flames. Even now, I have been incapable of discerning what was burning. What the hell is this fortress is made from? Explodium?

On other related news, the demons seem to be... retreating further into the places they own now. They all seem to be assembling in the panic room. All of them. I guess the non-euclidean architecture of HellCannon finally took a toll in their sanity and they panicked. I don't know if this is awesome or horrific.

The demons keep clearing the caverns from undesirable guests. I thought that I was never going to say this, but they are doing quite a good job. It's just impressive.

It seems that The Glorious President, with his brand new adamantine axe, took his first "danger lesson", so that his skill, by... wait for it, 5th Felsite, is Competent in axes, shields, and has become quite the proficient fighter! Hooray!

Shit keeps being set in fire down there. I am surprised that we ain't boiling up there yet.

What is that sound? Sounds like... a bear. We do have bears? And trolls. OH SWEET ARMOK THE TROLLS WE DIDN'T SEAL THE MAIN ENTRANCE

The bear is keeping them in place thought. Well. Time for Kar Puwuncobi to earn a title, I guess. So they position next to the door and, wait, where's Deathsword? NONONONO President! There are like seven trolls in there! Wait for backup.... Well, it doesn't seem like he needs any of that...

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Nine Notable Kills

Mishos the hill titan, d. 216
Theÿise Belchgreases the forgotten beast, d. 217
Stozu the troll, d. 218
Stosbub the troll, d. 218
Ngom the troll, d. 218
Usbu the troll, d. 218
Smunstu the troll, d. 218
Nako the troll, d. 218
Smunstu the ogress, d. 218
```

A few seconds later into the fight, and he already earned a title: "Kar Puwuncobi XLII The Glorious President, The Grasping Nut of Bogs"

After the trolls, some wilddeath came in. Take your bets on what happened to them, if I tell you that the Presidente and a grizzly bear were in their path.

It seems that some demons picked a fight with clear a clear glass forgotten beast deep down in the fortress. The forgotten beast doesn't have time to attack, any of the demon's attacks can harm the beast. So, either threat has been neutralizated. it's so good when you can have twoo indestructible foes fighting among them, isn't it?

An elven caravan came to our fortress. I wondered how had they reached theplace. And then. I just had this realization: we had cleaned up the surface. For once again, we would be able to re-arm our outside traps. I told everybody to get going.

It wasn't a good idea.

```
The Skeletal Muskox kicks The No un Espia Trasgo in the left hand with his right front hoof, bruising the fat through the (pig tail fiber left nitten)?

The No un Espia Trasgo is no longer stunned.

The Skeletal Muskox misses The No un Espia Trasgo?

The Skeletal Muskox attacks The No un Espia Trasgo but She scrambles away?

The No un Espia Trasgo stands up.

The Skeletal Muskox charges at The No un Espia Trasgo?

The Skeletal Muskox kicks The No un Espia Trasgo?

The Skeletal Muskox kicks The No un Espia Trasgo?

The Skeletal Muskox collides with The No un Espia Trasgo?

The No un Espia Trasgo is knocked over and tumbles backward?

The Skeletal Muskox attacks The No un Espia Trasgo but She scrambles away?

The No un Espia Trasgo stands up.

The Skeletal Muskox charges at The The glorious President?

The Skeletal Muskox misses The The glorious President?

The Skeletal Muskox collides with The The glorious President?

The The glorious President is knocked over and tumbles backward?

The Skeletal Muskox attacks The The glorious President but He scrambles away?

The Skeletal Muskox collides with The fle glorious President but He scrambles away?

The Skeletal Muskox charges at The The glorious President but the shot is blocked?

The Skeletal Muskox charges at The The glorious President but the shot is blocked?

The Skeletal Muskox strikes at The The glorious President but the shot is blocked?

The Skeletal Muskox strikes at The The glorious President but the shot is blocked?

The Skeletal Muskox strikes at The The glorious President but the shot is blocked?

The Skeletal Muskox strikes at The The glorious President but the shot is blocked?

The Skeletal Muskox strikes at The The glorious President but the shot is blocked?

The The glorious President is no longer stunned.

The The glorious President stands up.
```

IT WAS A TERRIBLE IDEA

P`Deathsword' Tangathmörul, No un Espia Trasgo has been struck down.

Far in the future...

The fortress has been empty for years, but nobody on the outside knows. Every year, the elves, dwarves, and humans send trade caravans to Hellcannon. Every year, they fail to return. This is how it has always been, and this is how it will always be. It's become a ritual of sorts for the outsiders.

Sacrifice your merchants to Hellcannon, and your crops will grow. The merchants embrace it as a challenge. Each wants to claim that they were the first to survive the trip to Hellcannon.

This year, it's no different. The 494th-annual elven caravan rolls up to the fortress. The ice is everywhere, stained dark red from millions of bloody deaths. The wilddeath watches the merchants, but do not attack. The merchants become excited, for it is believed that the wilddeath is the cause of all the deaths. The wagon pulls into the small entrance and descends into the fortress.

The elves walk along with their goods, looking in awe at the fortress. Everything is a dark shade of red, like the ice outside. They wonder among themselves what attacked the fortress and caused all this gore. It must have taken millions to spill this much blood. It would take nearly 500 years of annual invasions to soak the corridor this thoroughly...

The realization dawns on the elves. This is not the blood of invaders. Rather, it is the blood of the annual merchants, coming to the fortress in hopes of finding riches, but finding their deaths instead. The merchants try to turn and run, but it is too late. The traps have triggered, reducing the elves to a large puddle of blood, slowly soaking into the earth around them.

Deep within Hellcannon, as the last of the elves are liquified by the uncountable traps, a mechanism turns. One pump stack drains a reservoir of magma, while another fills it in a different pattern. A line of 5x3 tanks stretches incomprehensibly to the west. The 3 easternmost tanks are partially filled:

494

And so, the fortress counts its latest victim...

Hellcannon is a curse upon all life. The wilddeath has nothing to do with the deaths of the caravans. In fact, they are the least dangerous thing in the area. The dwarves are what really should be feared. Though they died centuries ago, they are still terrorizing anything that dares enter the fortress. Their corrupted souls haunt the fortress endlessly, taking pleasure in watching the pitiful life forms be reduced to yet another coat of blood in the entrance corridor. Even the demons of the underworld hide from the dwarves. Their monstrous creations know no bounds in their atrocity.

Another year passes. Another caravan arrives. The wilddeath have passed the point of being entertained by the slaughter. It's all just routine now.

495...

A haunting voice rings out from Hell itself. A ghostly dwarf is standing in a patch of strawberries, making a plaintive gesture.

"All according to plan..."

APPENDICES

+ Addendums+ and everything else that doesn't fit above

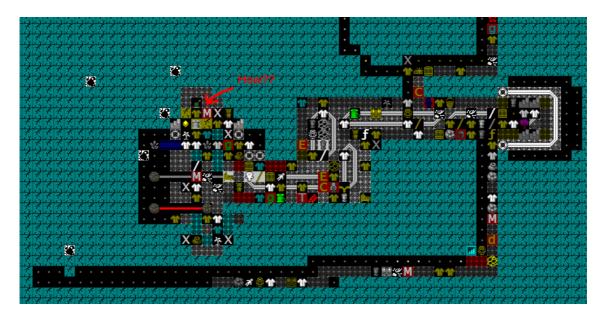
The Reclaim of Battlefailed

"When Battlefailed fell, there were attempts to reclaim it and continue the awesome. They failed, the fort was flooded beyond belief and apparently no longer playable. They gave up and made Failcannon nearby. But then several months later. This happened"

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: This was started January 29, 2011. It was all done by a single player. Unfortunately it seems to have been abandoned. Still, due to it's awesomeness, here it is.]

The records of Kikrost Duralkosoth of the Reclamation of Battlefailed Year 516

Let it be recorded here, for all time, that Tosid Bervor has a Legendary skill at getting lost. We and our five other stout companions set out to found a settlement on the shore of some pleasant ocean, with basking sharks, salmon, cod and longnose gar and other such wonderful things (mussels would likely be a necessary evil I'd just have to put up with). But with Tosid at the reins of the cart... I was awakened one evening from a pleasantly drunken nap by a sudden bump as the cart came to a stop. "I guess we're here," Tosid called out. I climbed out of the little nest I'd made for myself, blinking in bleary-eyed confusion at the sight that confronted me. To this day, none of us - not even Tosid - could tell you how he'd done it.



The cart had come to a stop on the roof of a rough stone structure of some sort a good three stories above the ground. There was literally no way it could have got up there, and more importantly there was no way it could get down. From our vantage point we could immediately see a number of foreboding details of the place we'd found ourselves in. It was a lifeless mess; there were vast quantities of skeletons and junk of every description scattered *everywhere*. An abandoned fortress. Recently abandoned too, by the look of it; the structure we were on had an array of windmills that turned in the fetid wind, the gears and axles of a small pump stack still creaking and rattling in a mostly functional manner. Where *were* we? Then I saw the answer and my heart sank screaming into the depths to hide. It was hard to recognize when viewed from the back side, but on the end of the structure that hung out over the fortress walls below was an enormous sculpture of a skull built from creepy white blocks.

Battlefailed. The fort was Legendary, but not at all in a good way. I remembered the palpable sense of relief that had circulated through the mountainhomes when word had reached us that it had finally fallen. No longer would anybody have to fear being sent there as migrants by the mad Queen

Led. And not even the Queen would have dared suggest a reclaimation party be sent there. Not after the story of its fall.

Well, we were here. And as the leader of this expedition it was my task to ensure our survival, even under the unexpected and absurd conditions we suddenly found ourselves in. I remembered the story of Battlefailed's fall and I immediately seized on its most salient point. Forgotten beasts from the depths and skeletal beasts from the Plains of Ooze. This place was crawling with death. There was only one safe place for a dwarf under such circumstances. "Strike the Earth!"

We each grabbed a single armload of supplies - I was sure risking a second trip would be suicide - and ran down the nearest flight of stairs. It was coated in a gray patina, a mixture of old blood and ichor and powders and other strange substances, but fortunately our sturdy shoes gave us purchase on the slippery surfaces. And even more fortunately, it kept us from getting any of it on our skins. Our pets and draft animals... not so lucky. By the time we reached the ground half of them were already laboring to breathe and bleeding out from every orifice. It was gruesome, but at least it was quick. None of them made it far.

Lesson one of Battlefailed; never ever touch *anything*. We checked our clothing to make sure no edges were flapping loose. Little did I realize at the time, but I would have to remain in the clothing I wore then for years to come.

Down at the ground level I spotted a pair of small tunnels carved into the sandy beachside cliff. These looked agricultural, which was exactly what we needed if we were going to hole up for a while until we could come up with a plan. Sure enough, inside were a pair of shallow chambers carved out of the soil. There were stone doors, but I knew that if Forgotten Beasts truly dogged our heels those would barely even slow it down. I ordered Nish Ismas, our stoneworker, to seal the entrances. He grabbed some rough gabbro that was lying nearby and quickly walled us in. I breathed a sigh of relief. Our quarters were a bit small but we had a copper pick, so we could dig out a quick expansion if need be. The important part was that we were safe enough to take the time to do so. The unknown monsters were sealed out. I went to take a quick stock of the resources we had available.

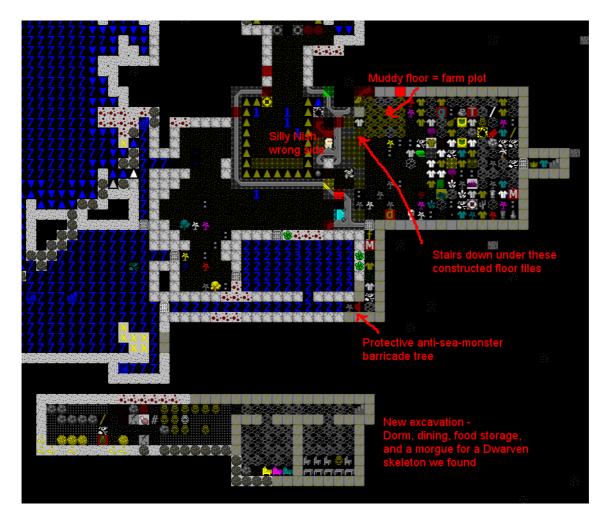
It was then that I saw the monster that we'd sealed *in* with us. A troll was lurking in the corner of one of the two rooms. When he finally roused himself I nearly had a heart attack; there was no way we could survive an attack from such a beast, we'd left our axes outside in the mad rush to get down here. But the troll was behaving strangely... it didn't lunge to attack, just sat quietly and regarded us with its beady black eyes. I couldn't imagine what it might be thinking - trolls were incomprehensible beasts at the best of times, and this one had somehow survived in the ruins of Battlefailed. Even monsters had monsters of their own. Who knew what horrors it had endured?

The impasse held for an excruciatingly long time, and then finally the troll grunted something that could almost be called a word. "Frrrrend."

Truly, the troll's mind was broken. It had no desire to attack us. And, not wanting to give it one, we let it sit in its corner undisturbed. And just to be on the safe side, I suggested that Nish take the gabbro mechanism that had fortuitously been lying in the dirt and build a cage trap in the corridor connecting the two earthen chambers. Should the troll snap a second time I hoped that this would be enough to contain it.



While cautiously poking around in the troll's cave I discovered a flight of stairs leading down. The level below was almost as rough as the agricultural caves, but I could tell that this was no crude root cellar; our refuge was connected to Battlefailed directly. Or at least to Upper Battlefailed, which I recalled from the stories was somewhat separate from the more elaborate Lower Battlefailed. I had Nish seal off a few more access points and we claimed this third chamber as part of our "safe zone". Nish was a little panicked at this point, understandably, and in his haste he wound up walling himself up on the wrong side of one of the doors; a moment of tense hilarity there as we sorted that all out. But once he was done that we could finally relax a little. There was some wood lying around, enough for a few beds, and we excavated a little stone to make other furnishings with. And we started tidying up the old half-decayed skeletons that were lying everywhere. We put them with the Friendly Troll, hoping that they would keep him occupied if he decided he wanted a femur to chew on.



With all of our immediate needs and threats dealt with it was time to start thinking about the future. As much as we all wanted to flee Battlefailed and its toxic sludge we also began to realize just what enormous wealth and opportunity lay under our feet. We called a meeting and voted. Battlefailed would be reclaimed. Shortly afterward, almost as if our decision had been heard somehow in the mountainhomes, a group of six fresh migrants arrived and scratched in piteous terror on our door. After confirming that they were dwarves and not monsters mimicking dwarven voices I had Nish briefly break down one of his walls to let them in. They had managed to become coated in ichor too, and none of their pets had made it far past the gates - it seemed that this poison was going to be our constant companion and shape the nature of the fort for some time to come. So be it.

Securing the surface facilities were out of the question for the time being, we didn't have the dwarfpower or the weapons to face whatever beings had doomed the first Battlefailed contingent. So the first order of business would be to drain and secure the chambers of Upper Battlefailed. After examining the lowermost chamber we had access to I soon discovered that a section of the floor was artificial, not carved directly out of native rock, and prying up the stones revealed a staircase. Below was a series of dank chambers running ankle-deep with water, with waist-deep water trapped behind doors in a small room filled with coffins. Stairs leading deeper still were present, but they were filled with swirling water too deep to explore. My first thought was to begin consideration of a pumping system. But the water down there was *flowing*, with a distinctive rushing sound thrumming through the floor and walls, and more importantly the water was fresh. It occurred to me that this water must be still coming in from an aquifer breach and draining off somewhere else. Pumps would barely put a dent in it; I had to get the source sealed off.

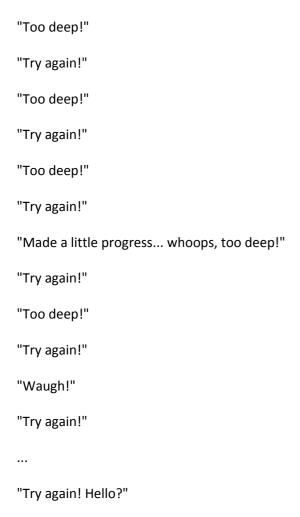
There was another patch of wall composed of artificial masonry, and breaking through revealed

exactly what we needed to do. There was a large chamber beyond with a corridor that was gushing out water, which then swirled down a hole in the floor near the middle. Fortunately, after observing the flow for some minutes, I was able to see that it occasionally ebbed just barely low enough that it would be possible to seal the corridor with a watertight door. I had Tekkud dig us a new access passage (the old one that had been walled up had an impassible hole in the floor between the room and it - presumably how the dwarves of First Battlefailed had held back the flood long enough to get the wall constructed in the first place). Then I sent a brave dwarf in there to seal it off.



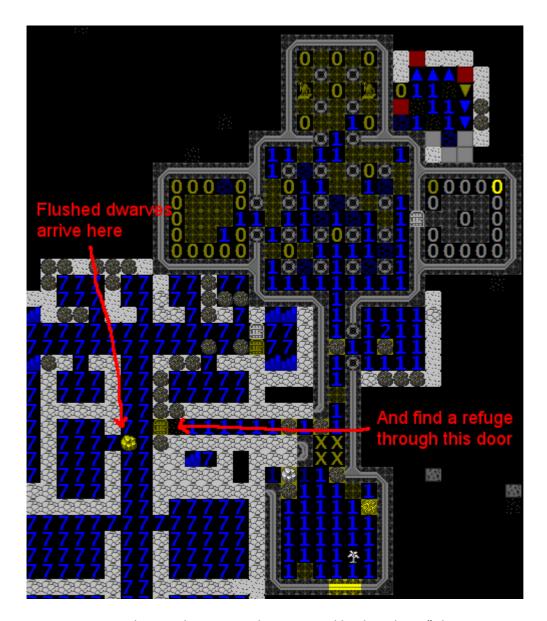
The water surged slightly and he came back, reporting that it was too deep. I sighed, patiently explained that he should wait for one of the momentary ebbs to do his work, and sent him back in. He returned immediately and reported "still too deep".

I am a patient dwarf, but there are limits and as leader of this expedition I sometimes have to put my foot down. I had a second door constructed in Tekkud's tunnel into the chamber and the next time someone went in to take a look at sealing off the aquifer I had the door locked behind them. This was probably the most important task in the entire reclaimation process and I'd not see it interrupted. "Try again!" I called through the door.



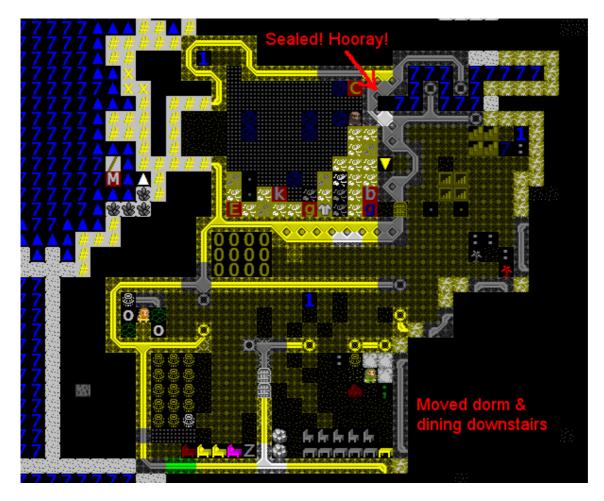
It seemed that the rushing water and treacherous footing had combined to flush the poor worker down that hole in the floor. Most unfortunate. Still, this was *very* important, and some progress *had* been made. I still had eleven more dwarves I could send in there. I called for another.

It was a long, tedious process. In the end only six dwarves were swept away. Before you call me a monster, however, it turns out that we didn't lose any of them. Three floors down, right next to where the hole in the floor deposited the clumsy-footed dwarves, was a doorway that had protected a chamber from the flood. True, the chamber was not a pleasant place - its architecture was eerily foreboding and it was filled with coffins - but they had each other to keep themselves company.



I can just imagine how each new arrival was greeted by the others. "Ah, I see you got Door Duty after me, eh Urist?" "Yeah. I didn't finish, so make room. More probably coming."

Once the aquifer was properly sealed the water levels began to drop. The dwarves below, not wanting to wait any longer, took the door that had protected them off of its hinges and in one fell swoop much of the water gushed through their refuge and down the staircase still deeper. In short order the entirety of Upper Battlefailed was, if not dry, at least traversible. There was now plenty of room for us to move into.



After a tentative exploration of the staircase that had served as Upper Battlefailed's drain we discovered that it went a long way down, all the way to the vast caverns below. At a level halfway between the surface and the caverns was a dense network of mineshafts carved through marble; I decided to use this space as a boneyard and to seal off any deeper passages for now. We had more than enough room for our current population and much work ahead of us in getting it back to liveable condition.

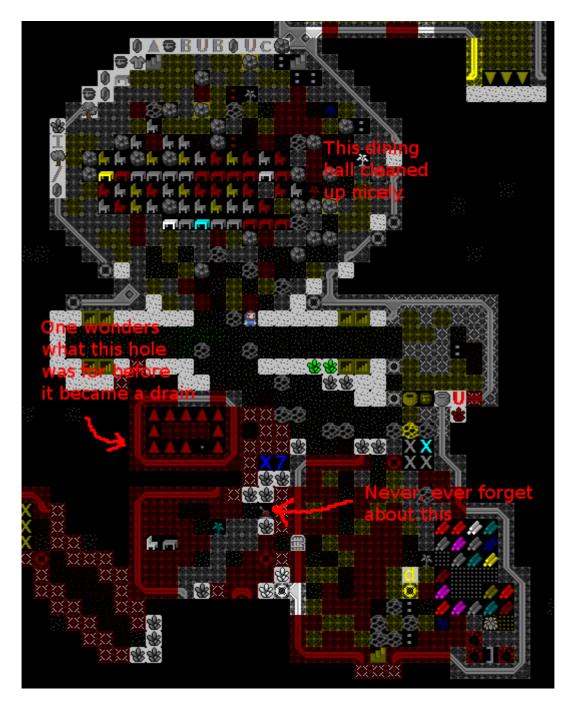
As the end of the year approached things were actually going quite well, all things considered. Mountainhome sent more migrants; I begin to wonder if they ever really cared whether Battlefailed was alive or not, and dread to think of how many may have died out there on the Plains of Ooze between Battlefailed's fall and resurrection. And then a trading caravan arrived, too. It was small, but we were short on food and rich in finished goods so that gave me the impetus I needed to begin the next step in my plan; secure the surface.

If there turned out to still be living Forgotten Beasts lurking around up there at least the caravan guards might keep them busy long enough for us to re-seal the place.

It turned out that there weren't. Securing the surface turned out to be almost anticlimactic after a year of cowering underground. The barrier walls were breached, a trade depot was built in a perfectly-sized niche in the sand that seemed to have been used for that purpose a long time ago, and I declared that all of the refuse within the walls of Surface Battlefailed were now fair game to be hauled into proper storage places.

Oh, and since we were unable to locate a lever that was clearly marked as operating Battlefailed's

main drawbridge gate, I had a new lever constructed down in the room I'd claimed as the fort's administrative office. Here it is:



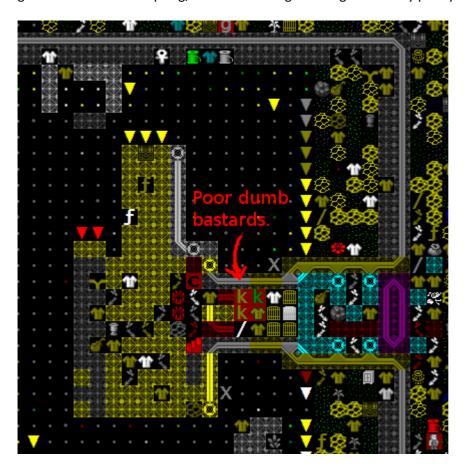
Seems like an important thing to remember so I'm making a note of it here.

Oh, in the meantime, I sent a brave scout down the large spiral ramp we discovered. It seemed like a far more important passage downward than the simple staircase that had served as Upper Battlefailed's drain, and sure enough, it appears to lead directly down to Lower Battlefailed. Surprisingly, most of it appears to be muddy but otherwise dry; only isolated rooms are still full of water, most of which should be easy enough to reclaim simply by taking a door off its hinges. Still, we don't have enough dwarves to begin work down there yet, and who knows what dangers still lurk there. We'll stick to the surface and Upper Battlefailed for now.

Year 517

The first half of 517 was uneventful.

Yes, truly, half a year passed with no significant events to report. Oh, there was one; during the summer a kobold ambush squad snuck in through the main gates after we opened them to allow a trade caravan inside. They slipped adroitly past the traps, of course, but they weren't prepared for Battlefailed's *real* hazards; they weren't wearing shoes. Most of them didn't make it through the gatehouse before collapsing, their feet rotting and lungs mercifully paralyzed.

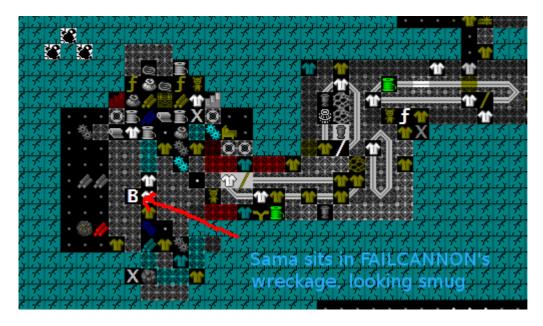


Not much of an ambush. Note to all denizens of Battlefailed; never ever take your shoes off. Ever.

But then an event we'd been fearing for our entire time here finally came to pass. Sama llethefotha, a huge noseless bull with three tails and curly lavender fur, was spotted just outside the fortress' walls. And it was moving fast! The gate was closed, but Battlefailed's surface fortifications have a fatal weakness - there are no seaward-facing defenses. The bull hopped in the ocean and easily swam around the end of the wall.

Fortunately we'd remained on a hair trigger, and by the time Sama got into Battlefailed we'd retreated back underground and sealed off the doors with masonry again. We could hear the sounds of Sama's rampage through even that, though. It went up the stairs of the central structure of Battlefailed, smashing doors and screw pumps as it went, and then when it reached the top it tore down the windmills and gears that had powered them. No great loss, really. The pumps had been part of a system called FAILCANNON that the previous denizens of Battlefailed had apparently depended on as an "ultimate weapon" for defense, but it was really just an oversized water sprinkler. The enormous skull sculpture mounted on its overhanging tip seemed far more useful.

And then, seemingly satisfied with the "terrible blow" it had wrought against the defenses of Battlefailed, Sama sat down and waited smugly in its lofty perch. Perhaps it was expecting us to come rushing out in a rage so that it could slaughter us.



We resumed reclamation work below, ignoring the beast. We now had plenty of food and plenty of farming space to get more. I was willing to let the next caravan's guards test their mettle against Sama.

A group of migrants arrived first. I was faced with a dilemma. Leave them up there to die? Or open the gates, breach the masonry plug, and hope they could run past Sama without the creature seeing them from its vantage point on the roof? If Sama got inside it would likely doom Battlefailed again, since we had no military of any kind to even attempt to challenge it (assigning a dwarf to military duty would result in that dwarf trying to change clothing, which would result in near-instant death). But I hadn't lost a single dwarf yet in the course of reclaiming Battlefailed, and more dwarfpower to haul Battlefailed's garbage was always in highest demand, so I decided to risk it.

Almost all of them made it. The last stragglers were spotted, however, and Sama roared down from his perch to tear them limb from limb. It spat terrible poison (the same lung-paralyzing stuff that was already spread everywhere), killing at great range. I ordered the masons to re-plug the door but they didn't make it in time; Sama burst inside, into the southern tree farm chamber that had served as our own first refuge. There was much screaming and running as my dwarves fell back, and although I designated a whole series of masonry plugs throughout the fort in hopes of saving at least *someone* it seemed like Sama was moving just too damned fast. It charged toward the northern tree farm chamber, headed for the main staircase that threaded through most of Upper Battlefailed.

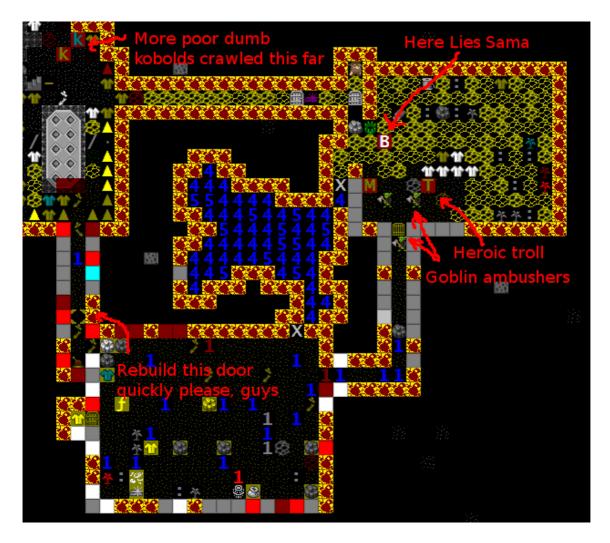
The friendly troll who'd spent almost two years crouched quietly in the corner looked up sharply at the commotion. "Frrrrend?" It grunted at the dwarves running past, just as it always did. We'd almost forgotten about him at this point, in fact - we largely just ignored the poor broken-minded thing. Then Sama burst in on their heels, snorting noselessly and spitting its venom. The troll's eyes lit with a terrible fire. "NOT FREND!" The troll roared, surging to its feet and charging.

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The Forgotten Beast charges at The Troil Lye Maker!
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Troil Lye Maker!
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Troil Lye Maker!
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Troil Lye Maker!
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Troil Lye Maker!
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The Forgotten Beast charges at The Troil Lye Maker in the left hand!
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The troll was mercilessly slaughtered. But miraculously, its heroism did save Battlefailed. In the course of its futile struggle, it seems that a small quantity of the vile poison Sama spewed all over it somehow got smeared onto Sama itself. And, like the proverbial scorpion, Sama was not immune. The beast was paralyzed, and soon died.

That poison is *nasty stuff*. Never ever take your shoes off. Sadly, nobody ever found out the troll's name - if such creatures actually have names - so its passing will go unmemorialized. Except by this journal, and by the fact that Battlefailed still stands.

As we tentatively slunk back up to the surface, the terror of our close call still fresh in our minds, we were immediately beset by a new threat. A goblin ambush party had followed the migrants inside (seems I was none too soon in opening the gates for them!). The goblins wore boots, thus thwarting Battlefailed's toxic defenses, but when they too entered via the old tree farm chamber we were able to lock the doors at both ends and trap them in there with Sama and the troll's corpses.



That gave us time to build enough cage traps to contain them all, after which I unlocked the door and let them back out into said cage traps.

Crisis over. Whew.

Certainly, we were very fortunate in how these events played out. In the end only two of the migrants died and Sama was defeated more by its own lethality than anything else. But it gave us all a dose of confidence, and also a shot of urgency; we were ready to finish claiming the rest of Battlefailed and seal it off from the rest of these horrors. I ordered the large spiral ramp unsealed and began moving us all down into Lower Battlefailed.

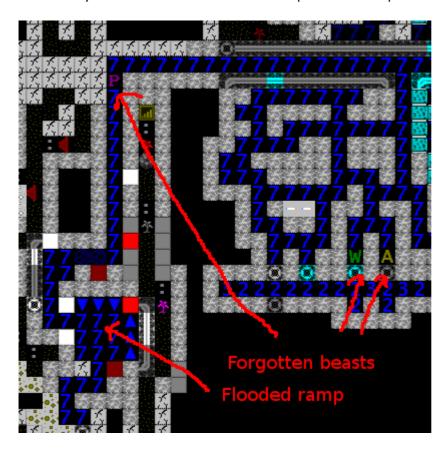
Year 518

After all the time we spent squatting in the relatively small and barren ruins of Upper Battlefailed, Lower Battlefailed is an awe-inspiring place. The large size and confusing layout make it easy to get lost in the many chambers down here, and there are so many nooks and crannies to explore that it's hard to tell what to do with it all. And Armok, is there a lot of junk lying around! Fortunately many of the coffins already built into the alcoves lining the grand ramp leading down here were unoccupied, so the first order of business - clearing the honored dead - went pretty quickly. The rest of the cleanup is going to be a years-long tedious task.

Most of the bedchambers in the two apartment stacks were unflooded, I've designated them all for individual use. Everyone in Battlefailed has their own room. The legendary dining hall was only

missing a few tables and chairs, easily filled from what was already lying around. The enormous room at the lower end of the spiral ramp made for an excellent stockpile space to gather and sort Battlefailed's goods.

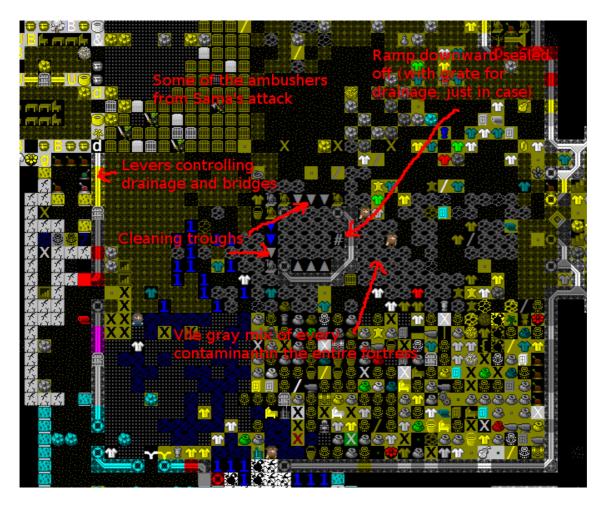
All is not entirely without obstacle, however. Below the enormous chamber's level, the spiral ramp descends to levels still filled with water. The records we've recovered indicate that Battlefailed's magma forges are down there, as well as much of the fort's metals and other riches, but draining it won't be as easy as just dismounting a few doors or digging a hole through a wall. We'll need to use screw pumps for this one. But also down there are no less than three Forgotten Beasts, lurking in a water-filled side tunnel partway down the flooded section of the ramp. I'm certain that any attempt to drain the ramp will disturb them, so I'm reluctantly putting off this final stage of reclamation for another day and instead have had the flooded part of the ramp walled off.



In the meantime I have begun to give some thought to the question of how to deal with the poison that pervades Battlefailed. This is a challenge I've never heard a good solution for, at least not for dealing with a situation of this scale. My plan, ultimately, is twofold:

- 1 once the fort's goods have been sorted into stockpiles, allow a large portion of the fort's population to go idle. This should give time for cleaning tasks to be undertaken.
- 2 dig a series of "cleaning troughs" across the busiest thoroughfares to ensure that contaminants aren't tracked back into cleaned areas.

I have already established the first cleaning troughs at what seems to be the central nexus of traffic in Battlefailed right now, the base of the spiral ramp where it enters the giant chamber I'm using for stockpiling. The following diagram shows this:



Each cleaning trough contains 3/7 water, deposited via bucket brigade. Over top is a retractable bridge, just in case the troughs need to be sealed off for whatever reason. Dwarves path through the troughs just fine at that depth. Even though the troughs quickly became a mire of the most disgusting stuff imaginable, whenever a dwarf passes through one he comes out with nothing but a coating of clean, pure water covering him. Amazing.

I'll put a trough at the entrance to the dining hall, too. Perhaps once all the armor littering the fort has been gathered in one place I'll be able to put one at the entrance to that stockpile's chamber and dwarves will be able to safely suit up for military duty. We'll have to see how things go, if most of Battlefailed can be cleaned up it may not be necessary to worry about it.

I must make a note to buy some cats from traders at the next opportunity and see if I can chain up a breeding pair someplace clean. Having kittens wandering the hallways will be a good way of identifying patches of paralytic poison that still need to be taken care of. We're a completely pet-free fort at the moment but I'm actually starting to miss the wretched things. They're a good emergency source of meat, if nothing else.

Not that we'll need it. A somewhat disturbing fact I have learned is that a butcher can recover a usable amount of fat even from a years-old skeleton. Our food stockpiles are overflowing with masterful tallow-based roasts made from the remains of the animals that perished in Battlefailed's fall. As long as you don't think too hard about that, the taste is fantastic...

The surface fort is pretty much cleaned up now. We haven't made much progress in cleaning up the stuff littering the landscape outside, though. Goblins remain as the one really serious threat we still haven't got a handle on thanks to our complete lack of military. Several caravans and migrant waves have fallen victim to them out there; we've had no choice but to keep the main gate sealed and watch helplessly as they were slaughtered. In the lulls between ambushes we've managed to at least recover the corpses. Old Battlefailed's coffins are now all occupied, so I had the cages and ropes removed from what seemed to be either a zoo or prison and have turned that into a new catacomb.

Old Battlefailed has been completely drained now except for the magma forges. I had to have some drainage tunnels dug underneath the northern block of apartments; the "living pod" design is an efficient one but the stairwells are vulnerable to getting blocked off by standing water. I considered rushing the drainage of the magma forge chamber when one of our weaponsmiths, Stukos Zatamzuntor, fell into a fey mood and wouldn't accept a regular forge to work at. But I doubted we could have done it safely or in time so I had a small and temporary magma forge dug out beside the old one for now. He produced an artifact steel crossbow and then I had him get to work forging silver warhammers and steel axes for the day when it's safe to change our shoes.

Shortly afterward Stukos was caught on the surface by two goblin ambush parties. I sadly wrote him off as doomed the moment I heard word, and ordered the gates shut. But it seems Stukos was a hunter before he became a weaponsmith, and he was still carrying his old bronze crossbow and silver bolts (no wonder he crafted a crossbow - the dwarf knows his ranged weapons!). With a combination of bolts and bludgeoning, Stukos actually managed to send both ambush parties fleeing with several kills to his name. Mark well the name of Stukos - I'm sure this dwarf is destined for greatness.

Now that I had such a legendary metalworker in Battlefailed and the time pressure of his mood was passed, I decided to make the attempt at draining the magma forge chamber. The pumps were put in place and a narrow slit was carved into the chamber from the side, too small for Forgotten Beasts to come through if the disturbance caused them to come down there. Indeed, once the pumping started, one did - a towering fire-breathing pterosaur named Fetho. The beast went absolutely nuts, in fact, running back and forth throughout the sealed-off section of the spiral ramp frantically searching for something to kill.

Battlefailed's luck with Forgotten Beasts remained solid, however. Fetho ultimately came to rest in a chamber some distance away from the spiral ramp, whose purpose is unclear. It is a five-by-five chamber, two levels tall, with four pillars supporting the roof. It lies directly underneath the arena. Once it seemed to have settled down there, I cautiously ordered the spiral ramp unsealed and then had a mason run down to wall Fetho up in its new abode. Once that was done I had the tunnel that Fetho had entered the spiral ramp through walled off as well, leaving the magma forge chamber completely secure. As soon as the water level was down to 4/7 I gave my dwarves the go-ahead to begin sorting through the items down there.

Such treasure! It seemed that much of the fort's loose items had been washed down there, to the lowest point in the fort, as the flood waters had drained away. There were also many, many skeletons. As my stout dwarves waded around waist-deep in the filthy, cluttered water, the skeletons tangled their feet and threatened to drown them. I told them to stop being such ninnies. Skeletons are harmless-

HOLY ARMOK! One of the skeletons, a huge muskox that looked no different from the rest of the charnal pit's denizens, rose up from the water under its own power and struck down several of my dwarves. Half of the fort's population must have been down there in that mess, the panic was indescribable. But fortunately with that many dwarves packed together against just a single beast of modest size, no matter how unnatural, the battle was brief. The muskox was torn apart and settled

back into the muck to rest.

Needless to say, I had several additional butchers' shops constructed to speed up the processing of skeletons. Best to get them all safely dismantled before another incident like this occurred.

Once the room was cleared, I set about restoring the magma workshops themselves. A new magma channel had to be dug, the old one had of course been quenched by the water. The new forge seemed to inspire another of my weaponsmiths, who claimed the workshop and constructed... another artifact steel crossbow. Let it be known that the legendary weaponsmith Zefon Tunomiltast is a copycat, and not nearly as cool as Stukos! Though of course it is always good to have backup talent.

Also during this year, no less than three new Forgotten Beasts showed up in the undercaverns and made an attempt to invade Battlefailed. A crocodile-beast, a lobster-beast, and a giant tick-beast. All three of them never made it out of the old central staircase - they all stumbled to a halt, paralyzed on rotting feet, and then slowly bled to death from every orifice. I begin to wonder if perhaps we shouldn't clean up *all* of this poison... though I fear the day a beast composed of nonliving matter tries to come in via that route. I've ordered hatches constructed to seal off this entrance when needed.

In related news, we had a lot of kobold ambushes show up this year, all of them with bows. The solution to their annoying sniping of dwarves on Battlefailed's walls was to open the front gate and let them in. There were no survivors (a handful managed to get back out of the gates again but they all bled to death or asphyxiated within a few steps).

In the last months of 519 I noted that the cleanup of items within Battlefailed is nearly complete. There is a woeful lack of bins here and I've been having our carpenters churn them out as fast as they can, and now most of the hauling activity consists of packing already-salvaged stuff into the new bins. So I launched the first major foray outside of the walls of Battlefailed, claiming a swath of the stuff and marking it all to be dumped right inside the gates. I estimate that we got about one third of the stuff inside before a goblin siege arrived and I had the gates sealed once more. We have just shy of 100 dwarves to our number, so it should be just a few more months to sort and store that salvage.

It seems that Battlefailed's business is well in hand.

Year 520

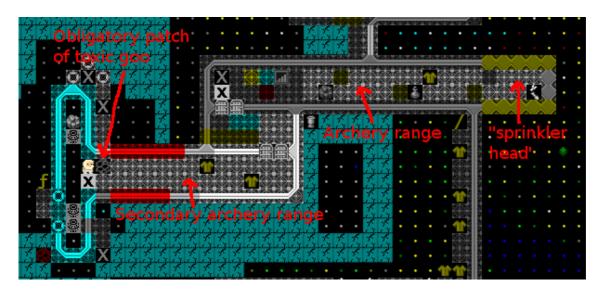
It has been several months since my last entry and it's dawning on me that we can't continue with business as usual any more. True, business as usual is going fine right at this very moment - the goblin siege is helpless against us, binning of finished goods is still proceeding at a breakneck pace, and the bank of magma smelters I ordered constructed are burning three shifts a day smelting the ore that was left littering the halls. But that goblin siege isn't going anywhere this time and more migrants and trade caravans are no doubt on their way. It's time to get a little more proactive.

Perhaps also came a sign from Armok. Logem Rodimrovod developed the aspect of one fey the other day, and after claiming a bowyer's workshop that I didn't even know we had proceeded to turn out our third artifact crossbow - this one in the medium of black-cap wood.

We still dare not wear armor, the mere act of changing into it is more dangerous than any attack it may deflect. And so I have ordered a set of bronze crossbows to be forged and designated a squad of dwarves to wield them. I have told them on no uncertain terms that they are not to change any other part of their uniforms; just pick up a crossbow, a quiver and some bolts, and get to training. I

appointed Stukos as captain of the guard and assigned him to wield his own artifact crossbow.

Battlefailed appears to have been left with no identifiable barracks or archery ranges to reclaim. I have decided to repurpose the ruins of FAILCANNON. The "sprinkler head" looks like it could actually serve as a decent station for a squad of crossbowdwarves to rain bolts down on invaders, and the "barrel" of the structure will make a fine pair of archery ranges to keep the squad nearby while training.



I will no doubt be called a philistine for desecrating the purpose of this noble construction, but frankly, I think it will kill far more goblins this way. Not to mention that the pump stacks and power systems would need a complete rebuild to use it for its original purpose. Perhaps someday.

No sooner had I set up a schedule for our military then I received reports of yet another new Forgotten Beast arriving in the deepest depths. Perhaps Armok wanted to test our new military, but if so I figured Armok would be disappointed this time. "It has blood, yes? It breathes?" I asked the messenger. He nodded and I nodded back; no need to lock the hatch in that case, or disturb the military. I made my way down to Lower Battlefailed to watch this new creature die.

It was a great three-eyed bat named Lased, with a broad horn and short golden hair. Exactly as expected, it flew toward the staircase of death... "Oh, Armok." In a flash I realized my hubris. Battlefailed meant death for any living thing that set foot within it, but this creature was *not* setting foot as it came. "Lock the hatch! Lock the hatch!" I hollered as I ran the rest of the way to the mineshaft boneyards where I had ordered the hatch installed. The hatch was there alright, resting open on the stairwell, but it appeared to have never actually been mounted in its frame. Pinned next to it was a small piece of parchment with the words "To do - Melbil". It had clearly been pinned there a long time ago, probably right after I'd given the construction order.

"To arms! Kill it! Kill it!" I admit to no small amount of panic at this point. Everything had been going so well. Was this how it was going to end? Surely, though, a squad of crossbowdwarves would be able to hold off this one beast - they just had to get one bolt into one of its wings, make it falter and touch the ground, and everything would be fine. The staircase was long. They just had to get here in time.

The bat's shriek echoed as it came barrelling up it toward me. Where was the guard? Ah! A marksdwarf came running around the corner, dodging the fleeing civilians crammed in the narrow corridor. "Olin! Good man! Quick, put a couple of bolts in that... uh... where's your crossbow?"

"Haven't had time to pick it up yet sir," Olin Dorentost panted. "Or bolts. But look, I've got a quiver! And a backpack with two square meals, and a full waterskin, if you need me to go on a lengthy patrol. I'm prepared."

"... good. Chap with the wings, there. Go get him." I had passed beyond panic into an interesting sort of dream state. Surely this couldn't all be my fault, could it? What had I done wrong? All of my orders had been perfectly clear and reasonable.

To her credit Olin didn't hesitate. She ran down the stairs to meet the monster, which had paused to demolish the old half-completed pump stack that had been built along part of the staircase for some now-forgotten purpose, and lunged to the attack. It was incredible! Olin was completely unarmed and unarmored, but she flung herself on the beast and began pummelling it with her fists. The creature was so taken aback that it didn't even try to counterstrike.

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Page 1/4 FPS: 100 (48)

Dwarf Fortress

The Marksdwarf punches The Forgotten Beast in the right foot with her right hand bruising the fat!

The Marksdwarf kicks The Forgotten Beast in the right upper leg with her right foot bruising the muscle!

The Marksdwarf punches The Forgotten Beast in the left upper leg with her left hand bruising the fat!

The Marksdwarf punches The Forgotten Beast in the upper body with her right hand bruising the muscle and bruising the right lung!

The Forgotten Beast stands up

The Marksdwarf attacks The Forgotten Beast but It jumps away!

The Marksdwarf punches The Forgotten Beast in the left wing with her left hand bruising the muscle!

The Marksdwarf punches The Forgotten Beast in the lower body with her right hand bruising the fat!
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Was Olin really going to pull this off?

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The Forgotten Beast attacks The Marksdwarf but She jumps away!
The Marksdwarf attacks The Forgotten Beast but It jumps away!
The Marksdwarf attacks The Forgotten Beast but It jumps away!
The Forgotten Beast conjugnt the wind warfsdwarf in the right hand tearing apart the muscle through the wind warfsdwarf six right mitten)x!

An artery has been opened by the attack and many nerves have been severed!
The Marksdwarf is knocked over!
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Marksdwarf by the x(cow leather shoe)x with its left wing!
The Forgotten Beast scharges at The Marksdwarf in the right upper arm the forgotten Beast scharges at The Marksdwarf in the right upper arm the forgotten Beast scharges at The Marksdwarf in the right upper arm the forgotten Beast scharges at The Marksdwarf in the right upper arm the forgotten Beast scharges at The Marksdwarf in the right upper arm the forgotten Beast scharges at The Marksdwarf in the right upper arm the forgotten Beast scharges at The Marksdwarf!
The Forgotten Beast collides with The Marksdwarf!
The Marksdwarf is knocked over!
The Marksdwarf is knocked over!
The Forgotten Beast releases the grip of The Forgotten Beast sleft wing on The Marksdwarf with its intention with its intention with the proportion beast releases the grip of The Forgotten Beast sleft wing on The Marksdwarf sx (cave spider silk right mitten) x with its set wing the marksdwarf in the right foot tearing apart the marksdwarf is knocked over!
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Marksdwarf!
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Marksdwarf!
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Marksdwarf!
The Forgotten Beast charges at The Marksdwarf in the left lower arm the forgotten Beast spide with the Armsdwarf in the left lower leg with its left wing on The Marksdwarf is knocked over!

The Forgotten Beast collides with The Marksdwarf in the left lower leg with its left wing on The Marksdwarf is the Marksdwarf in the left lower leg with its left wing on The Marksdwarf is the Marksdwarf in the left lower leg with its left proport
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Oh.

As Lased tossed the battered body of brave Olin down one of the ruined pump stack's open shafts my brief moment of hope fell with her. I began pondering what other last-second defenses I could order constructed. But it was probably too late. If Lased made it up to the boneyards, past that useless half-constructed hatch, there were many directions he could go from there - they couldn't all be sealed, not in the brief seconds we had left. My hundred dwarves were going to die. Perhaps I could find a place to hole up with a few survivors, to start over yet again and reclaim Battlefailed a

second time... but would it not be more humane to let it end for good?

Then a miracle happened. Just as Armok tests us, so to he inspires us.

Olin had only fallen one floor, coming to rest on a ledge immediately below. Ignoring her grievous injuries she crawled back up the filthy staircase beside her, adding to the thick layer of toxic grime that already clung to her worn clothing. Lased was clearly as shocked as I was and the creature hesitated long enough for her to scream out one word before she struck again: "Blood!"

```
The Marksdwarf is no longer stunned.
The Marksdwarf punches The Forgotten Beast in the left foot with her left
hand. bruising the fat!
The Marksdwarf punches The Forgotten Beast in the upper body with her
left hand. bruising the muscle and bruising the heart!
The Forgotten Beast stands up.
The Marksdwarf punches The Forgotten Beast in the right lower leg with
her left hand. bruising the fat!
The Forgotten Beast attacks The Marksdwarf but She scrambles away!
The Forgotten Beast falls over.
The Forgotten Beast is completely paralyzed!
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Lased tasted Battlefield's blood.

Needless to say, I called for every medic in the fort to halt all other activities and take Olin to the hospital. Chief medical dwarf Zaneg personally came down to recover her. Sadly it looks like from the state of Olin's foot she'll not be walking again any time soon, so I later had to replace her in her squad with a new recruit. Other marksdwarves arrived and set about beating ineffectually on Lased's immobile body with their crossbows - did *nobody* have bolts yet? - and eventually it succumbed, but let it be known that the kill rightly belongs to Olin.

Once the immediate aftermath was being dealt with I went back to my office and sat down heavily at my desk. The close call had shaken me. I thought I had prepared for this eventuality... "Melbil." I methodically rifled through my records. "Melbil Lumashasan - construct stone hatch cover." I raised my voice. "Bring him!" One of the newly-minted guardsmen, Kib Uzoldakost, headed out and in short order the craftsdwarf was standing before my desk. "Why did you not complete this work order?" I asked.

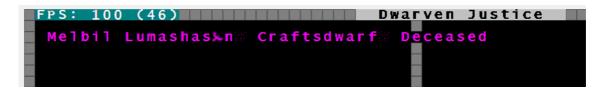
"Uh..." The dwarf thought back. "Ah yeah. There was a stack of elk bones in the way."

"Well, yes, the hatch was in the boneyards. I specifically remember de-designating the staircase as part of the boneyards when I ordered the hatch built. Why didn't you move the bones out of the way?"

Melbil shook his head. "That wasn't my job. I figured I'd be told to try mounting the hatch again once it was done."

"Ah, I see. Thank you." Melbil walked out of the office and I turned to the guard who had brought him. "We all do our jobs here, right?"

The guard gave me a grave nod of acknowledgement and followed Melbil out the door.



A second goblin siege force showed up a few days later, reinforcing the existing goblin army still present (100 goblins total, plus two dozen trolls), but my confidence had cautiously returned. Their

numbers didn't matter; none of them could get through Battlefailed's walls unless we *allowed* them through. My dwarves were safe from that threat at least.

■ Kivish Avuzoltar® Recruit has been struck down ■ Kogsak Adekvab≜k has become a Hammerdwarf®

What?? I immediately rush to the scene of the report - Kivish's own bedroom. How could any enemy have managed to get in here? Where were they? Kogsak stood alertly in the room next to Kivish's bed, where his corpse lay, wielding a blood-soaked crossbow. I blinked in shock, even more stunned as I realized what had really happened. Kogsak didn't seem at all deranged or angry. "Why?"

"Doin' my job, sir,"

"Please elaborate."

"Oh. Well, you remember how Mayor Fikod put in an order for native silver items?"

I wracked my brains. "That was years ago. It was a foolish request, we barely had food to go around at the time."

"Yeah, well, Kivish here was supposed to do it anyway, and he didn't. So the mayor sentanced him to a couple months in the clink. But we didn't have none, and so I figured why not just rough 'im up a bit instead? It's all over and done with then."

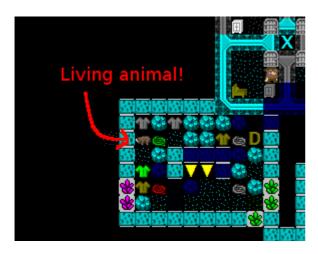
I looked again at Kivish's corpse. Kogsak had smashed the dwarf's skull, completely shattered it, and I was pretty sure I could see brain matter leaking from the wound. I guess it was apt that I'd ordered the cages replaced with coffins in Battlefailed's old prison, Kivish was going to the same place now either way. "I'd better order up some chains," I sighed and walked out. I couldn't exactly complain considering the example I'd set with Melbil.

The summer progressed fairly normally after that. I considered trying to lure the goblins in closer to the fort so that my marksdwarves could get a little target practice in on live targets, but one thing worries me - out among the goblins is a single solitary one who carries a bow. An extremely high-quality bow, in fact. Her description matches that of a legendary elite bowgoblin named Em Uspungamxu, and I'm betting she's a good enough shot that she'd be able to get some arrows through our fortifications if it came to a sniping match. I don't want to lose any more dwarves right now. So, I've ordered the construction of another contingency; a number of ballistae. Their field of fire should cover the region that she's currently in, and their fortifications will have drawbridges built behind them to allow them to be sealed off and maintained safely if the goblins get closer. We have enough ballista parts already in stock from old Battlefailed, but we have no ammo so it'll take a little while to get this set up. Good to be prepared though.



I also had several more cleaning troughs installed, including one in front of a small disused room that appears to be completely uncontaminated. This will be the "breeding chambers", should I manage to acquire a breeding pair of any sort of animal. Once the cleaning trough was installed I had several ropes put in (making sure that they got dragged through the cleaning trough on the way in, just in case they were themselves contaminated). I believe that we may actually be making progress; only a couple of dwarves were involved with installing the ropes but afterward the trough's water was still completely clean. A trough I had installed in the entryway to the apartment complex is likewise at least partially clean, despite a large number of dwarves travelling through it.

I have discovered that we actually have a caged male warthog and a caged male donkey in inventory, apparently recovered from one of the destroyed caravans during our recent foray out of the fort before this siege began. I've ordered the warthog roped up to test the safety of the breeding area. It seems to actually be surviving!



I've also installed a cleaning trough in a small detour of the main stairway going through the boneyard. It's high enough up that any creature that gets there is probably not vulnerable to the stairway's poison anyway (or if it is it's a flyer like the Lased and will need to be tackled by a toxic dwarf - a tactic I've decided to call "trolling").

As the summer came to a close, a happy event occurred! Heroic Olin, who I had expected would remain bedridden for life and accomplish no more great feats, got a fey glint in her eye and struggled out of the hospital to claim a clothier's shop. I half expected her to somehow manage to make a crossbow out of cloth, but instead she made a silk shirt of the highest quality.

This was balanced by a sad event. The dwarven baby, Rovod Raberkeskel, grew large enough that her mother Meng put him down. I immediately designated a safe zone encompassing Rovod and Meng's rooms, the dining hall, and a food stockpile and associated kitchens. Close examination shows no signs of contamination here. Meng was reassigned to cooking and brewing duties in the hopes that Rovod would not stray far from her mother. If only there were some way I could have the child chained up next to the warthog! But no, a child does as it pleases.

Rovod walked on her own from 14th Galena until her death on 17th Galena when she bled out. I have been unable to locate the source of the contaminant that killed her. I do think the situation is improving, though - the cleaning troughs are blue most of the time now, not sickly gray. Here's hoping the next one lasts longer.

Then a happy event occurred! The hundred goblins camped outside gave up on their siege and departed. The ballistae will be ready for next time, at least. I heard reports of items being stolen shortly after the siege left, so I ordered the main gate opened. Sure enough, kobold corpses began appearing in the gatehouse.

Then a gigantic one-eyed wasp named Idgag emerged on the first cavern level. It located a way into the spiral ramp that had been overlooked until now, a small underwater opening that had been used as a source of water to fill a large cubical reservoir. Fortunately Idgag merely sat in this opening and waited, allowing us time to wall it off. I do not pretend to understand the minds of these creatures.



The first excitement of Autumn came in the form of another gigantic insect from the deeps, this time a thing named Aci that resembled a giant rove beetle. This beast was yet another that was capable of flight and so I ordered marksdwarves to report to the boneyard with a certain sense of dread. The hatch was now complete and could be locked in the event of catastrophe, but catastrophe would likely mean the loss of my best (and only) warriors.

As we peered down the long staircase, however, it seemed there was someone else who'd be facing trouble first. A miller named Tholtig Shedimashrir was running up the stairs just ahead of Aci, hauling a load of native silver ore that was presumably destined for the smelters. I was amazed at how fast he was able to move with that load and even more amazed that he refused to drop it. Unfortunately Aci was much faster. It caught up with Tholtig as they passed through the second cavern layer, where the now-empty pump stack shafts were exposed to open air and Aci could fly freely. The giant beetle dove at Tholtig.

Tholtig dodged, causing Aci to slam into the wall next to him and fall to the ground. This was all that was needed to coat the beast in Battlefailed's special blend of poison, Unfortunately, as fast acting as the poison normally was, it wasn't fast enough to save Tholtig; Aci recovered almost instantly from the impact and snatched him up by the torso with its mandibles. I've seen many horrible deaths in my time here but this was one of the most brutal; Aci injected its own flavor of venom into Tholtig's helplessly twitching body and then threw him forcefully down the stairs with one wing, dashing his body apart on impact. There was never any real chance of us intervening. Now that Aci had been successfully trolled and there were no survivors to evacuate I ordered the hatch locked and waited for Aci to perish.

The beast showed no signs of going down easily. Aci's movement became sluggish but it did not become paralyzed; instead it launched itself into the air and started careening wildly around the second cavern layer, dripping a cascade of ichor from its joints as it went. The beast's head and

thorax seemed to be especially damaged, perhaps from its direct contact with Tholtig, and its right wing (with which it had tossed the hapless dwarf) was rotting so badly that the stench was almost visible. Every time the beast crashed to the ground or into the lake below I expected it to finally succumb.

But it didn't. Instead it eventually came to a rest perched on the side of the natural pillar that the staircase ran through, the flow of ichor ceased, and Aci *survived*. Its head and thorax were broken, its wing rotted, but its condition appeared to stabilize and its lesser wounds healed.

Absolutely amazing. The constitution that creature must have is incredible. Fortunately for us Aci appeared to have at least been permanently crippled by its experience; though still alive it seems to show no signs of moving from where it has come to rest.



While all this was going on Uker, a shrimp beast, appeared. It got paralyzed when it entered the now-abandoned magma forge drainage system and the dwarves working the forges got to watch it slowly die though the fortification in the wall, rotting from the feet up.

Meng gave birth to a new baby girl. Here's hoping she'll be able to grow up where her sister did not.

A caravan from the Mountainhome arrived. It was followed by a kobold ambush party that resulted in the following adorable scene:



Five kobold ambushers, each becoming paralyzed and collapsing exactly on top of each other as they passed through the gatehouse.

Winter was fairly uneventful. A blue wolf-beast appeared in the second cavern layer, but since that layer was sealed off when Idgag came poking around it just wandered aimlessly. A lizard-creature similarly joined the herd in the first cavern layer.

Most significantly, a serendipitous accident occurred near the end of winter. I had ordered a breeding pair of donkeys to be tied up in the "clean room". Two donkey cages had been moved there beforehand so that they would never be removed from containment outside of that controlled environment, but apparently the animal handler I assigned to the task wasn't entirely clear on the purpose of the exercise. He ignored the cage adjacent to the rope and decided I must have meant for him to tie up one of the donkeys still stored in the animal stockpile on the other side of Lower Battlefailed. I quickly received word of the donkey's death and rushed to see what had happened.

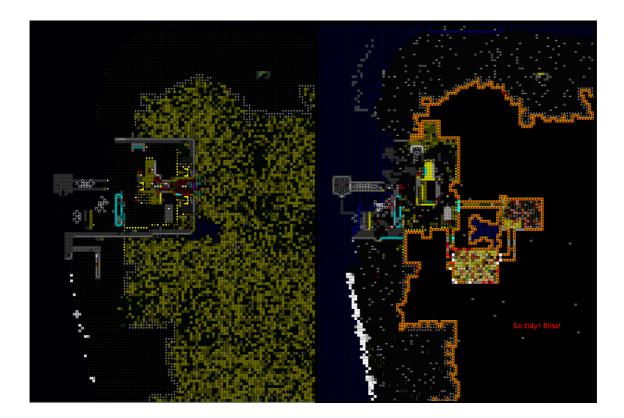
The trail of donkey blood made it fairly obvious. The animal handler had dragged the donkey through the dining hall on his way to the clean room and the donkey had begun bleeding only a few steps beyond the dining hall's cleaning trough, which was at that time filled with contaminant-laden water. My previous observations had suggested that passing through a contaminated cleaning trough should have been safe even for unprotected creatures; at no time did they ever have contaminant on their skins, only a coating of pure water. But this was a highly suggestive result! I must do more science to these donkeys...

Year 521

Surprise! The siege is back. There was just enough time to call all the garbage-collectors inside, but in the confusion nobody was able to get to the lever to close the front gate. Fortunately, I've been passing the time trying to clear up some of the weapon clutter by building traps in the gatehouse. The first three rows consist of nothing but bows and arrows, then there's a row of conventional melee weapon traps, then the old cage traps left over from Old Battlefailed.

The elite goblin lasher leading the first squad of goblins through the gate dodged his way through the weapon traps in an amazing feat of agility but landed in a cage trap. His troops followed and were completely pincushioned. One wounded goblin that managed to flee had five arrows stuck in various parts of his body! The next troop to make it to the gatehouse suffered exactly the same fate - the elite leader was caged, the followers were routed. A contingent of trolls was next and they managed to barge on through, overwhelming both cage and weapon traps, but the siege was already broken at that point and the goblins fled. I suppose they were expecting another long and boring waiting game like last time. The trolls that got inside were dispatched by the crossbowdwarves.

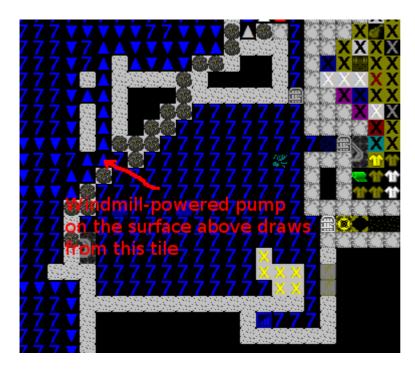
Having beaten back the siege so quickly this year, I decide to go for broke and designate every remaining item outside of Battlefailed's walls to be moved to a dump site right inside the gates. Operation: Spring Cleaning is a success, after months of hard hauling effort the exterior surface of Battlefailed is clear!



Another of our weaponsmiths developed a fey mood. This time the product was an artifact platinum mace. Perhaps for the best; having _four_ artifact crossbows would have been a bit much!

Now that all of the junk from outside the fort is secured inside, there's time for a few smaller projects.

- 1 Experimenting with cleaning troughs. The most recent dwarven caravan brought two mules, which are useless for breeding. I have had their cages placed in the clean room. The trough leading into the clean room has poison in the water, and I will install clean grates over it. The door on the lower level is pet-impassible. I will release one of the mules and allow it to cross down into the lower chamber, which as near as I can tell from examining it is completely clean. If the mule survives unscathed for a while, I will open the grates and allow it to pass through the poisoned water. We'll see how it does.
- 2 There are three rooms in upper Battlefailed that are still flooded, immediately adjacent to the ocean. I will build a windmill-powered pump and attempt to get them drained and sealed as well.



3 - Spring Cleaning Part II. We have in inventory: 101 crutches, 22 wooden short swords, 25 wooden spears, 28 wooden long swords, 37 suits of wooden armor, 63 wooden and bone leggings/greaves... I have stopped counting specifically. There are over 2200 articles of armor, 1300 articles of legwear, 1500 articles of headwear, 2300 articles of handwear, 2600 articles of footwear. Much of these items are extremely poor quality articles recovered from invaders or hapless caravans. Half of our 250 shields are made of wood. There are 168 buckets. We have 23 barrels of Gnomeblight and I can say with great confidence that the last thing Battlefailed needs to worry about is a gnome infestation. This is all a vast, useless waste of storage space. No wonder it has taken so long to get everything inside!

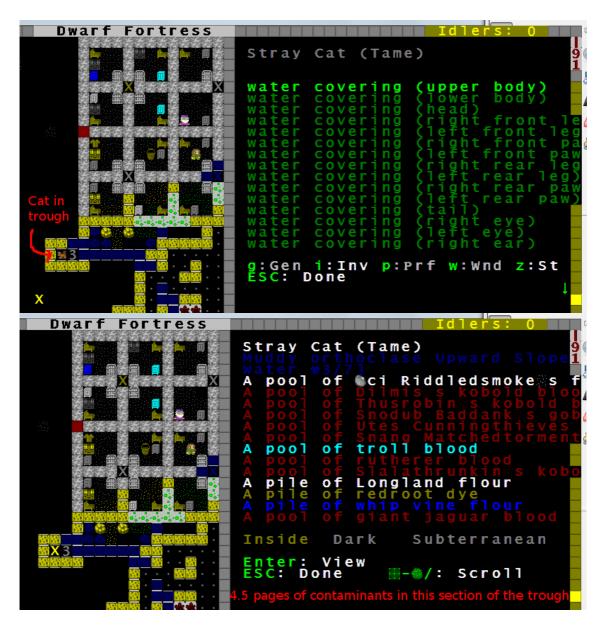
I'm going to order that much of this mountain of junk be dumped into a spare magma aperture down in the forges, making allowances to spare items of particular artistic merit. That should take a little while but if I need dwarfpower for other tasks I'll order a portion of the fort to stop hauling refuse.

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meat 123 willow mail shirts #2] D highwood mail shirts #6] D chestnut mail
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A giant serpent with noxious secretions arrived in the third cavern layer. It died before reaching the staircase.

I just recieved an unexpected notification that a cat had suffocated. Checking up on the situation, I find that my attempt to rope up several cats for breeding in the clean room has gone awry; although their cages were placed right next to the ropes I'd ordered them tied to, cats are slippery beasts and managed to escape the fumble-fingered dwarf I had assigned to the task. One was dead in the

hallway just outside the safe zone, but I saw that the other one was still splashing through the trough (which had not yet been sealed with grating). I locked the door to prevent it from escaping and observed.





Although the cat's body parts were listed as being coated only in water, the cat quickly went limp and began to gasp and mew piteously as it rotted from the paws upward. This, then, confirms the cause of Rovod's death; the child passed through a cleaning trough on her way to her bedroom.

Should Battlefailed fall again and a future reclaim party find these notes, take heed. Cleaning troughs will clean dwarves and the items that they carry with them, but they will _not_ protect a vulnerable dwarf passing through one even though the dip is brief and doesn't appear to get anything other than water onto their skins.

Next I confirmed this finding by finishing the grating and releasing a mule as planned. The dwarf that released the mule had contaminants on his mittens and shoes, since he didn't pass through the cleaning trough now that the grates are in place, but the released mule remained standing in place for a long time after being released with no sign of syndromes. Animals exposed to these contaminants are usually paralyzed perish within a matter of moments. Eventually the mule went downstairs, over the grate covering the corpse of the cat, and came to a stop against the door (which was tightly sealed). It appears uncontaminated. I will leave it until autumn and check up on it again then unless I receive word of further developments in the meantime.

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Deler Stizasherush has grown to become a Dwarven Child
Thob Umarolin Carpenter cancels Store Item in Stockpile: Drop-off
inaccessible
→Deler Stizasherush Dwarven Child has suffocated
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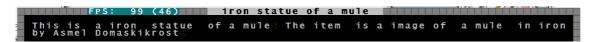
Oh dear. Deler picked the worst possible place to learn how to walk, all the way up on the surface and far from the "safe zone" I have been preparing down in Lower Battlefailed. I tried assigning him and his mother to it (the Thob mentioned in this log) but he stepped in a pool of toxin mere moments after entering the spiral ramp downward. Quite tragic, this would have been an ideal moment to test whether covering over those cleaning troughs was sufficient to render it truly safe.

On the plus side, the mule is still alive as of the end of summer. I'll unlock the zoo now and allow it to wander to the dining hall in autumn; it should follow roughly the same route that killed the donkey that was dragged through the cleaning trough (which is now covered with grates).

The past year has been a relatively uneventful one, with much that progressed entirely according to plan and therefore little that bears recording herein.

There was a brief period of excitement and anticipation as I put into motion the equipment to drain the last three flooded chambers of Upper Battlefailed. What treasures remained undisturbed under the fetid blue ocean waters down there? According to the records I had uncovered, those chambers were flooded well before Battlefailed finally fell - they could contain lost relics of that earlier time. As the pumps drained the uppermost of the three rooms we found only more of the usual carnage - a tangle of old skeletons, woven together by sea life and surging waves into a gruesome mat covering the floor. There were a few Forgotten Beast skeletons among them, which suggested to me that this place had been a deliberate dumping ground. Wonderful - we'd found one of old Battlefailed's garbage middens.

But there were chambers below that one that looked more promising. After the holes in the seaside wall were sealed, a new pump was built and a hole punctured in the floor. Now that we no longer had to contend with a constant inflow of sea water the draining went much more quickly. Aha! A chamber containing statuary!



Oh.

Well, a disappointment to be sure, but at least we opened up a bit more sorely needed storage space. We filled these rooms with garbage too.

Speaking of garbage, I suspended Operation Spring Cleaning II after just a few months. It was painfully obvious that as quick as it had been gathering up all the trash from outside the fort, hauling it all down piece by piece to the magma chamber far below was going to take far too long. I had to come up with a more efficient alternative.

I considered building a compactor on the surface, near the current location of the heap of trash, to crush the junk into a more manageable state. But that didn't seem a suitable fate for such rubbish. I wanted it to *burn*. Retreating to Lower Battlefailed, I went alone to the richly-engraved throne room to study the maps that we had pieced together of the geology of this place. For hours I overlaid them, compared their scales and carefully aligned them top to bottom. At last I had found the perfect spot. I summoned our chief miner, Tekkud.

"There," I pointed to a spot a short distance beyond the end of a mined-out limonite vein that ran just under the ocean's floor. "Exactly there. I want you to gather a mining team and sink a shaft."

"How far down?" Tekkud asked dubiously. I could tell he didn't like the thought of digging so close to a source of water; I expected him to complain every step of the way until he got back down into the drier depths where the ceiling wouldn't drip so ominously. It would be tedious cajoling him to continue.

"All the way down." I flipped through the maps. "This one spot passes directly down through a column of rock in all three cavern layers. There will be no risk of Forgotten Beasts or other dangers, just a straight drop all the way to the bottom of the magma sea. It will be a very short walk from the surface court to the top of the shaft; dig a passage wide enough for two dwarves to pass each other easily and the cleanup operation will be over extremely quickly."

Tekkud nodded, obviously pleased that he'd no longer be asked to walk up and down a hundred levels of spiral ramp all day long carrying trash. But he still seemed uncertain about the logistics of my plan. "It seems like we're going to be excavating an awful lot of rock for this. Won't that be just as much of a hauling ordeal?"

I shook my head, grinning. "No, that's the best part. You're digging a garbage-disposal shaft, right? So just let the rock you excavate fall *into* the shaft as you dig it out. Garbage disposed of, no need to haul it anywhere."

Tekkud blinked and then mirrored my grin with a manic glint. "Of course. Dwarven thinking!"



When the shaft reached bottom I directed that a two-level-tall hallway be carved, so that it would only be half-filled with magma and thus the engineering more visible. I wasn't sure why I was concerned with improving the appearance of the site - I was sure that no visitor would ever come down there. At least, I was sure until I had the fortified magma inlet carved and heard report of the structure of the surrounding magma sea.



Such a nice formation - a single isolated stalagmite of diggable rock descending all the way down to the depths. I'm sure I'll find some interesting use for the space down there at some point. Until then, though, the garbage-dumping resumes at a much faster pace. By the end of 521 most of the surface trash has been disposed of, with the remainder that was worth salvaging being brought below as the stockpiles in the deeps get their own scouring of low-quality crap to make room for it.

Meanwhile, there is more good news to report about Lower Battlefailed. The baby Stukos Mengbecor, daughter of the engraver Goden Zuntarsanreb, learned to walk. Goden and Stukos were immediately assigned to the designated "safe" zone, and unlike poor Deler they were close enough to make it there without Stukos stepping in anything unfortunate along the way. Stukos has now been living down there happily for over half a year. I believe this confirms that the dining hall, food stockpile, living quarters, and kitchens are all safe (Goden was assigned kitchen duty as well, so that she would have something to do once she'd finished smoothing the Safe Zone). More recently, Urist Shematak began to walk on her own - the daughter of Meng, who tragically lost her first child Rovod to my ill-conceived "cleaning troughs" (which I have since renamed "death troughs"). Urist and Stukos seem to be getting along well together, playing as children do. A donkey foal joined them, the first live animal birth in Battlefailed. The foal has been remaining close to its mother, who is still roped up in the quarantined clean room, but the mule I had released earlier is also still alive and staying in the dining hall so it may also survive once it matures to wander a bit farther afield.

I have had the cows unpacked from storage and roped up in the clean room next. It will be nice to get some fresh beef on the tables - we've subsisted on little other than Ancient-Corpse-Tallow Roasts and Poisoned-Forgotten-Beast meat for far too long.



There have been no further goblin sieges, and the suicidal kobolds appear to have ceased coming as well - perhaps leaving in despair at the sight of the clean sandy fields outside of Battlefailed. We did receive a few minor goblin ambushers, however, and the marksdwarves' perch in the sprinkler head of FAILCANNON has proven to be an excellent sniping position indeed - especially when facing foes with no ranged weapons of their own. One particularly brutal example ensued, a goblin ambusher who was caught between the arrow-traps below and marksdwarves above:

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A medium-sized humanoid driven to cruelty by its evil nature.

His left foot is broken His left foot is cut open His left foot is bruised His left upper arm is bruised His right upper leg is broken His right lower leg is cut open His right lower leg is cut open His left lower leg is broken His right lower leg is cut open His left hand is broken His right upper leg is cut open His left hand is cut open His right upper arm is broken His right upper arm is broken His right upper arm is broken His right upper leg is cut open His left upper leg is broken His right ear is cut open His right ear is cut open His right ear is broken His right ear is cut open His right ear is cut open His right ear is broken His right ear is cut open His right shoulder is bruised His guts is broken His right shoulder is broken His left upper body is cut open His right kidney is broken His left upper body is cut open His right kidney is broken His left upper leg is broken His right kidney is broken His left wrist is broken His right false rib is broken His pancreas is broken His left wrist is broken His studied His somewhat tall head is somewhat broad His hooked nose is extremely short He has high the of the wide His hair is carmine his skin is olive
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Song Smuruksos Goblin Maceman

**Song Fondledsteal**

({giant cave spider silk loincloth}) Lower
({large rat leather tunic}) Upper body
({gremlin leather robe}) Upper body
({gremlin leather silk cap}) Head
({cave spider silk cloak}) Upper body
({giant cave spider silk cap}) Head
({cougar leather left glove}) Left hand
({cougar leather right glove}) Left foot
({giant cave spider silk sock}) Right hand
({giant cave spider silk sock}) Left foot
({giant cave spider silk sock}) Left foot
({giant cave spider silk sock}) Stuck in Comper body
({copper bolt}) Stuck in Lower body
({copper bolt}) Stuck in Upper body
({copper bolt}) Stuck in Upper body
({copper bolt}) Stuck in Night lower leg
({copper bolt}) Stuck in Upper body
({copper bolt}) Stuck in Night lower leg
({copper bolt}) Stuck in Night upper arm
({copper bolt}) Stuck in Lower body
({copper bolt}) Stuck in Night upper leg
```

The wretched creature had no fewer than fifteen projectiles lodged in various parts of his body and still he kept twitching and crawling when bouts of consciousness returned to him. In the end, the marksdwarf Zon Evudkol felt enough pity for the thing that she climbed down from her perch and put it out of its misery with a single blow to the head.

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Page 11/11 FPS: 100 (48)

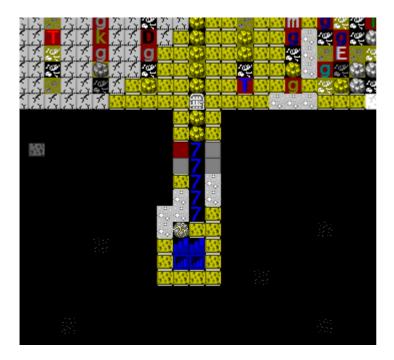
Dwarf Fortress

({cave spider silk cloak})!
A tendon in the right false rib has been torn!
The flying {bronze bolt}) strikes The Goblin Maceman in the right upper leg chipping the bone through the ({cave spider silk cloak})!
A tendon has been torn!
The ({bronze bolt}) has lodged firmly in the wound!
The Marksdwarf bashes The Goblin Maceman in the head with her (steel crossbow) bruising the muscles jamming the skull through the brain and tearing the brain!
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Well, either that or she just ran out of bolts to fire, or perhaps body parts to stick them through. I choose not to think about it further. Zon's scary.

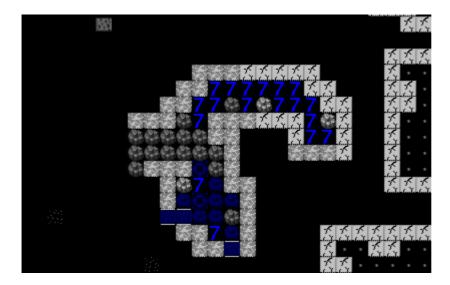
Provided we remain vigilant it would seem that we're safe from surface attack for now. Though an Elven caravan and a pair of migrants were not so lucky, being caught in the open before reaching the safety of our poisonous gates.

As the year wore on I realized that my clothing was beginning to approach a "tattered" state. I would soon be retreating to the safe zone myself for a while, along with my fellow founding members, and there was one remaining mystery of Old Battlefailed that I wanted to get a look at before I faced the incredibly risky process of changing into a new suit of clothing. In Upper Battlefailed is a series of rough rooms carved from a magnetite deposit that appeared to have never been used for anything before being abandoned and flooded. At the end of a hallway there is a staircase leading down, which is still flooded. The staircase goes a *long* way down, in fact - too far to see even though the water is quite clear. Draining it will be a matter of digging a drainage passage to it far in the depths. I estimated where it likely passed near the Boneyards and had a passage carefully carved to meet it.



Note the care I took to avoid disastrous floods in the event that the staircase had a reservoir above - by digging into the damp rock at an angle the pressure of the water's weight is defused, and the door serves as a further blockade. The Boneyards do have drainage via grates covering the remains of the old pump stack on the first cavern layer, but best not to rely on that if it's not needed.

And it wasn't needed. The brief glimpse the miner got when he breached the staircase revealed that we weren't close to our goal just yet. The staircase descended yet further down, around a landing, and to a mysterious chamber and hallway leading into darkness.



I have planned out a route for digging out a deeper drainage tunnel all the way down to this mystery chamber. It's a race between my failing shoes and the miners now to see what secrets will be revealed before I have to retire.

Oh, and I shall end the year on another fortuitous note. The armorer Mafol Akrulsanreb got a secretive air about him, seized some bars of steel and other components, and produced an artifact set of steel greaves. The first thing I've commissioned from our new prodigy is a set of poison-proof steel high boots. Here's hoping I'll be able to get into them without touching the tatters of my old shoes in the process.

Year 522

From the journal of Deler Cerolgim, bookkeeper

So, Tekkud and the other Founders have retreated to the "safe zone" for now, in anticipation of their protective clothing reaching its best-by date. The task falls to me to breach the mysterious flooded chamber that's been discovered underneath Upper Battlefailed. I'm not a very experienced miner but Kikrost assures me the plan is very simple and pretty much foolproof. Looking it over I have to agree; dig a staircase straight down from the Boneyards so that it passes near the flooded chamber, continuing down another floor and then out the side to drain into the giant lake filling the first cavern layer. A stoneworker accompanied me to help carve only a narrow Beast-proof drainage slot at the end of this tunnel. Then, once that's all done, strike the wall and as soon as the water starts flowing climb up a level to remain clear of it.

Ral Iddeduk, a bowyer who was a passing acquaintance of mine, told me this morning that he'd had a vision that night. He'd been peculiarly secretive about it and as I'd headed down here to dig he'd gone off to the workshops muttering under his breath. I wondered if he'd somehow known something about what I might find.

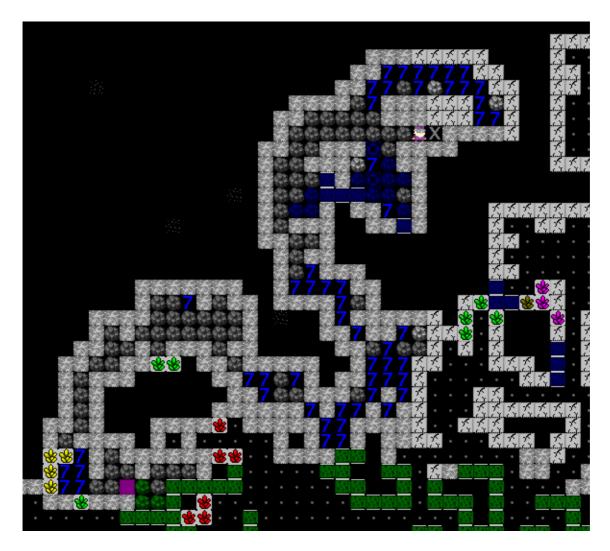
As I passed near the chamber's location the stone became damp, groaning quietly and sweating under the great pressure of the water. The flooded staircase leading down here was almost fifty flights tall so there was a lot of weight bearing down on it. But the path Kikrost had marked on the maps was indeed safe. I dug past it and soon enough the stoneworker and I were down in dry rock putting the finishing touches on the drain. I paused for a moment once it was done, peering out through the narrow fortification into the first cavern level. A steady low moan echoed through the vast space and at first I chalked it up to wind. But then the moan paused and I swore I could hear Aci

draw a breath somewhere out there before it resumed. I shuddered and went back up to the part of the shaft with moistened walls to finish my work.

The oozing water had been filtered through several meters of porous rock and yet it still reeked, the fresh-hewn walls already showing unwholesome stains and streaks. I shook my head and grimaced. This wasn't going to be glamorous. I struck, my trusty pick biting into the rock and flaking away rough chunks. Eventually the wet sheen became beads, actively dripping, and then thin high-pressure sprays began trickling through cracks. Almost there...

The final blow sank the pick's head unexpectedly deep, and then it was immediately blasted back out of the divot it had made by the jet of dark water. The jet was mixed with gravel as it clawed at the edges of the hole. I scrambled backward and hurried up the stairs, exactly as I'd rehearsed over and over in my mind, and managed to beat the flood. I was drenched in the foul-smelling stuff but unlike Tekkud my clothing held firm; after surviving the poisons of Battlefailed a little stink wasn't going to bother me.

The torrent blasted through for some time as the stairwells above drained. Technically, my job here was done; there were masons up there who'd been waiting for that to start happening and were no doubt already following the water down bearing blocks of stone to patch up the exploratory shafts that had been dug earlier. But I waited for the initial surge to subside, the staircase's water column emptied and the immense pressure gone with it, and peered back down through the hole once an airspace finally appeared at the ceiling. I had to admit it; Kikrost's regret at not being able to be present for this discovery had piqued my own curiousity in no small measure.



The passage beyond looked strange. Its walls were carved by tools, clearly, but it meandered in an aimless curving way that seemed unplanned. A mineshaft that had followed a vein of minerals, perhaps? No, from what I could see of the floor and ceiling there were no traces of minerals - just ordinary granite. Very strange.

The water was *foul*. Now that the stairs were empty the water was draining from the farther recesses of the twisty passage, and it bore with it the stench of decay. I was used to it, though - this would be far from the first flooded chamber packed with old corpses that I'd encountered here in Battlefailed. I started wading against the flow to get a better look around some of the corners, ready to flee if any skeletons roused themselves like that one terrible time in the magma works.

But there were no skeletons, no traces of any bodies. Just an oily sheen of rotten fat and pus on the surface of the water. I grimaced and forged ahead. What had died down here? Finally I spotted it. A huge, looming form half-submerged at the end of the twisty passage, curled up as if it had hidden itself away. It was some sort of giant lizard-like creature, and although it looked emaciated and its skin was glistening with rot it seemed basically intact. The great depth and stillness of the water must have preserved it somehow. I wrinkled my nose, hoping the butchers and cooks didn't get any ideas.

The water was deep and still no longer. The corpse *shifted*. I froze. Had it just been nudged by the flow? No. My heart started hammering harder as it stretched, rolling over onto its rotten paws. Disgusting fluids oozed from the network of scars that covered every part of its body. This was no

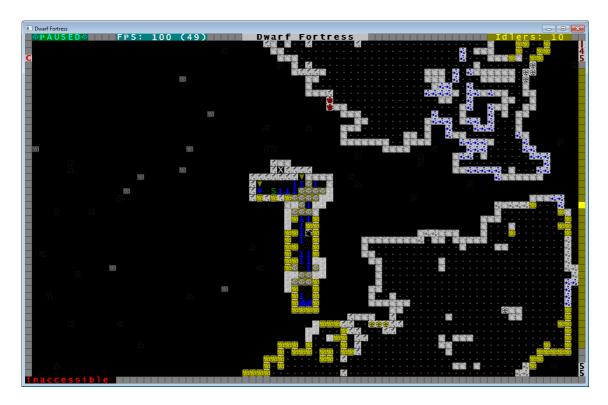
corpse even though it looked more than halfway to that state. It was alive. It turned its eyeless head toward me and emitted a shuddering huff. A hurricane of dust blasted through the cavern's air.



```
A great eyeless salamander It has three short tails and it appears to be emaciated Its emerald skin is warty Beware its deadly dust!

Its left rear foot is broken Its left rear foot is rotten Its right rear foot is rotten Its left front foot is rotten Its right rear leg is broken Its left front foot is rotten Its right rear leg is broken Its left rear leg is broken Its right rear leg is bro
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I, of course, ran screaming for the stairway. The creature followed in hot pursuit.



"Forgotten Beast! Seal the Boneyards! Seal the Boneyards!" The Boneyards were the old marble mines, a series of regularly spaced narrow passages below Upper Battlefailed that served as a common frontier when dealing with threats like this. The masons were already hard at work on the task and frantically put the finishing touches on their barricades as I ran past. One of them, I couldn't remember his name, worked so quickly that he accidentally sealed himself into the stairwell with me. That meant that the only way out for us was the flooded stairway's original entrance, in the magnetite halls of Upper Battlefailed.

It was a long stairway and my mind was racing as fast as my feet. The beast had been down here all along while we'd been exploring and refurbishing Battlefailed, with free access to the fort at any time. The only thing that had kept it quiescent had been the enormous weight of water flooding the staircase. Had the previous inhabitants of Battlefailed trapped it there that way? Was that the reason why the magnetite halls had apparently been abandoned before they'd even been furnished?

Every provision had been made in Kikrost's plan to allow this chamber to drain safely. No provision had been made to *stop* it from draining.

As we approached the top of the stairway the mason and I began to falter. The beast behind us was tireless. This near the original surface of the water there had been some life in it, a scum of biofilm on the rocks, and it made the stairs slippery; the mason slipped and fell in a puddle. I grabbed his arm and helped him up. "We need to seal the stair behind us!"

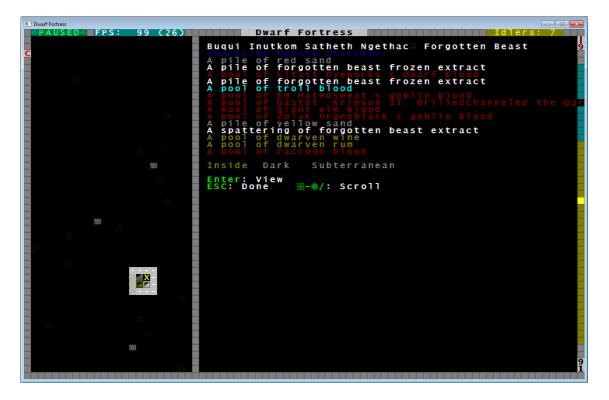
"Can't... can't..." the mason panted. "It's too wide, and there's no raw stone nearby. No time!"

"Then we keep running. Upper Battlefailed has been lost before, maybe we can survive losing it again." I wasn't sure I really believed that; I knew that Upper Battlefailed would be relatively easy to seal off from Lower Battlefailed, but not from the surface. And once this creature was out there, how could it possibly be contained? We'd be trapped below.

We made it up to the magnetite hall and I grimaced. So appropriately, the useless space had been

converted into yet another refuse stockpile; bones and skeletons were stacked everywhere. The huffing blasts of dust were coming right on my heels now and I knew my only hope was that it would pause to destroy some of the doors we'd installed for no reason other than a sense of neatness.

Then the creature stepped in the same puddle that the mason had slipped in.



Whatever had happened to the beast in the lost history of Battlefailed had left terrible wounds, but only now did it falter. The poisons of Battlefailed seeped in easily through the skin of its ruined feet. By the time it reached the top of the stairs its legs were barely working at all and it began crawling through the mounds of refuse, the splintered bones tearing at its glistening skin and rupturing the blood-filled blisters swelling in it.



Finally, the creature shuddered to a halt. Its breathing stilled, its dust settled, and it joined the rest of the corpses piled throughout the magnetite hall.



Later, as I shakily returned to Lower Battlefailed for a much-needed drink, I heard a shout of triumph from the workshops. I detoured by to see the crowd of dwarves clustered around the bowyer's bench.



Perhaps Armok is indeed telling us something.

From the journal of Kikrost Duralkosoth

We drained the upper part of the mystery chamber. There was a bit of excitement with some creature that had been lurking but Battlefailed poisoned it when it came out. Disappointingly, it seems to be just a random rough-hewn passage. There is a yet lower chamber that's still flooded, however, down a short flight of stairs. I've ordered a drainage pump built to see if there's anything more down there but I'm not expecting much at this point - perhaps this was just some sort of unfinished project started by one of the managers of Old Battlefailed.

Speaking of projects, I think the cleanup operations are in a very satisfying spot now - all of Lower Battlefailed is safe from poison and the clutter is being sorted and dumped efficiently. It's time for a few renovations to help settle us in here for good and assert our control over the caverns and surface beyond our walls. If this is where we're going to live, it's going to not just be livable, it's going to be *nice*.

Firstly, I'm going to have the magma works overhauled. There's floorspace down there for a lot more magma workshops than are currently installed, but the magma ducts will need to be re-dug to support them. For efficiency of operations we'll also need stockpile space down there for raw ore and other materials. For stockpiles, I'm directing that a second level be dug out directly above the forges; they'll be accessed by a series of nickel stairways directly between the workshops.

I've also had the fort go on a major door-installation push. Many doors had to be dismounted during the draining of Battlefailed, and many seem to have never been installed in the first place, but the masons have been busy and they'll be good for further compartmentalization of Battlefailed in the case of future disasters or flooding.

Many of the statues and workshops left over from old Battlefailed have items of trash (or even perhaps items of value) that the flowing floodwaters have wedged in to inaccessible locations. I'm having them removed and rebuilt.

We're in need of wood. While going over the maps planning out the drainage for the mystery chamber I noticed that the mystery bunker out on the northern beach has a ramp that leads directly down to the first cavern level. This should allow wood harvesting without risking exposing the fortress to the beasts that might be lurking elsewhere on that level. I've ordered that the bunker be refurbished with a drawbridge and roof to allow it to be sealed off completely as needed.

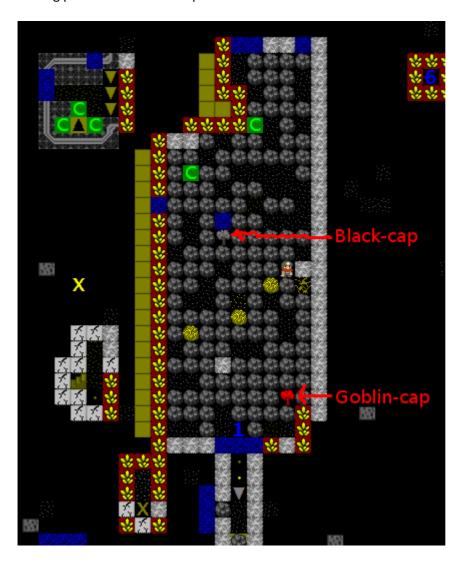


Armok damn it! This thing showed up right where I was going to cut down trees, just minutes after I finished designating them all. Fortunately I'd already had a hatch cover built on the ramp in that bunker years ago, before I'd known where it led - *because* I didn't know where it led. So this beast will be locked underground while the bunker is properly finished up and sealed to prevent surface vandals from accidentally unleashing it.

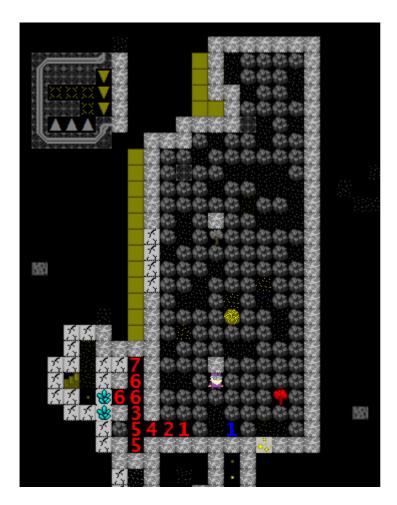
Instead I'll have wood harvested from the northeastern corner of the third cavern layer. There are a couple of Forgotten Beasts lurking down on that layer too, but they're all non-flying living creatures so if they're disturbed they should die easily enough when they enter the stairway of death. Hopefully we won't lose many woodcutters or haulers in such a circumstance.

I've determined that there's just three ramp segments between the safe zone and the magma works that are still contaminated, I've ordered them rebuilt with fresh stone to expedite cleaning them. Then Safe Zone workers should be able to work the forges and furnaces too.

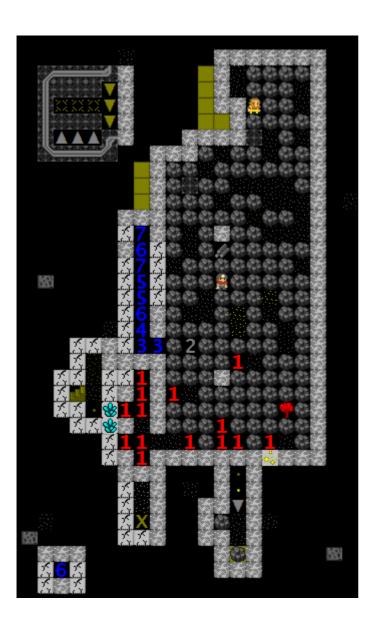
Meanwhile, digging out the new "attic" for the magmaworks has run into some odd difficulties. It seems that the stone in this area has an interesting history behind it. The miners reported discovering a tiny water-filled cavity in the obsidian with a full-grown still-living black-cap tree sealed inside. Another contained a goblin-cap. Elsewhere they encountered inexplicably warm walls. It seems that this area was at some point covered in magma and then doused with water to harden it, leaving pockets behind. How peculiar.

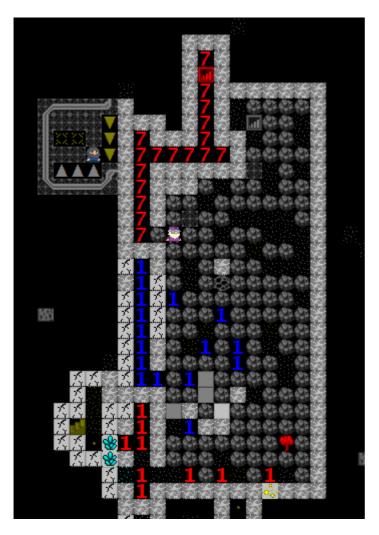


Well, there are no visible connections to the magma sea or any other fluid sources, so these pockets shouldn't be all that big. I ordered an exploratory hole poked in one, as far from the stairs down as possible to give any flow time to dissipate.



It looks like there was an old magma channel at the former ground level that got sealed over by the flooding. That's not so bad. In fact, the magma is doing some good up there - when the trees were dug out the spilled water washed some contaminants off of the miners and spread it around a little. This magma is cleaning some of it up. To get the rest I ordered the next section of the magmaduct to be breached as well.





```
silty clay Cavern Floor
Magma #1/7]
A pile of olivine
A dusting of emerald dye
A pile of gabbro
A pile of whip vine flour
A pile of redroot dye
A pile of Longland flour
```

Winter still remains of the year 522, but I don't anticipate much excitement now. The mysteries have been delved into, now all that remains is rearranging the furniture. New projects will be planned at the turn of 523.

A Forgotten Beast composed of mud appeared right in the middle of the patch of trees we were harvesting on the third cavern level. Mud seems unlikely to be affected by Battlefailed's poison, so I ordered the lumberjacks back into Battlefailed and sealed the hatch in the Stairway of Death until such time as the beast moves somewhere else. We're now blocked from access to any cavern level.

The last chamber down the long flight of stairs from Upper Battlefailed has been pumped dry. As expected, there was nothing in it aside from rubble.

More kobold corpses appeared in the gatehouse. This could presage an attack.

The bottom of the old magmaduct uncovered by the digging in the magmaworks' "attic" had a lining of ashes. A burned silk mitten, pig tail hood, pig tail cloak, and an iron battleaxe was recovered. It seems likely that one of old Battlefailed's dwarves died here, but of course his or her name is lost to time. I've ordered a blank memorial slab erected on the location.

Another child began walking. He was halfway up the main spiral ramp at the time but successfully made it down to the "safe zone". Now that the safe zone's population is expanding with multiple mature dwarves along with the children, it's been expanded to encompass all of Lower Battlefailed - the workshops, the stockpiles, everything. Battlefailed is still a bit muddy but the poisons are now largely the exclusive domain of the surface (where rain washes it off of haulers and where the main gatehouse is awash in pools of the stuff from dead invaders), low-traffic parts of Upper Battlefailed, and the Stairway of Death entrance to the third cavern level (now blocked off).

I ordered that the now-unoccupied windmill platforms be removed from FAILCANNON, along with some of the extraneous staircases clinging to its sides. I've also had some pumps powered by a temporary windmill constructed to reclaim the short flooded passageway beneath FAILCANNON's base - if FAILCANNON is ever rebuilt to spray seawater again it should be done in a less haphazard manner, at least. These are just leftover bits of housekeeping for now, but I feel that next year may involve renovations to the surface facilities.

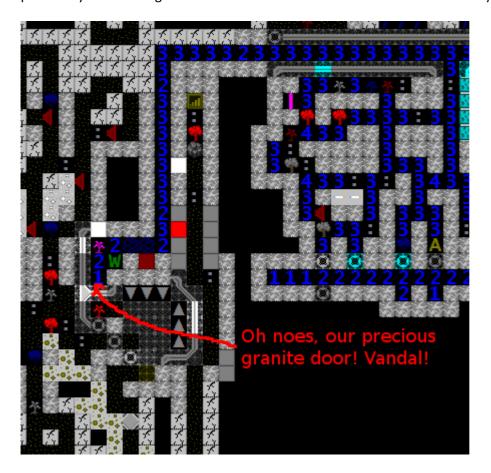
In the final days of 522 a goblin siege force arrived on the surface. Little activity was going on outside the gates so they were sealed out forthwith, along with the bunker on the north shore. They do not appear to have brought any bowgoblins or crossbowgoblins with them so next year's journal should open with a lovely rout of their forces by marksdwarves in the Sprinkler Head - already Stukos and Mistem have driven off a squad of swordsgoblins with their sniping, killing three and crippling four more. I've had the gate temporarily reopened to lure more goblin forces into crossbow range but the new year will come before they get close enough.

Now that Lower Battlefailed appears to be safe it's high time to get a full proper military force equipped; I'm consolidating all of the weapon and armor stockpiles down there to allow safe changing. This should take a few months of hauling so it won't have anything to do with the current siege, however.

Another bit of housekeeping for next year; the water level in Lower Battlefailed's well has been slowly dropping over time, indicating that whatever reservoir it's connected to is either finite or is filling more slowly than it's being used. I've not bothered exploring this much before but now that more dwarves are depending on it as their sole backup drinking source (the only other well is in Upper Battlefailed, supplied by an aquifer but in unsafe territory) it's time to look into this. There appears to be a manually-operated pump stack in the western edge of Lower Battlefailed that supplies this reservoir but I have a plan that goes beyond simply refilling the existing reservoir. More on this next year.

Our population is now 160 dwarves. I've designated a new level of apartments to be dug out directly above the existing apartment stacks, furnishing these will be one of next year's tasks. Temporary dorm space has been designated in the old arena.

The year opened with a bit of a startling false alarm. "Kikrost!" Athel Edemanam came rushing up to me in a panic. "A forgotten beast! It's destroyed a granite door!" I had taken care to seal the caverns in such a way that Beasts couldn't get in to any destroyable barriers, so I immediately feared another potentially-fatal oversight and rushed to the scene down in the third cavern layer.

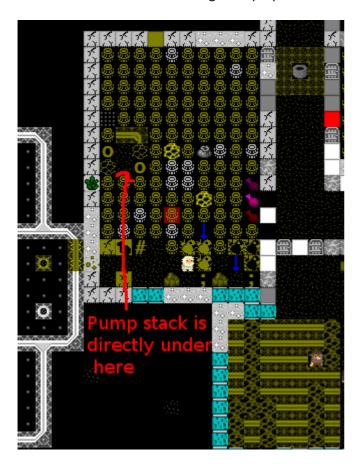


Silly Wothana, that door's been sealed by masonry since forever. Still, it's interesting to note that now that the water level in that twisty warren of passages has dropped below waist height the Beasts that had been lurking there have roused themselves and begun wandering. It seems that although Forgotten Beasts don't drown, a healthy application of water can at least make them quiescent.

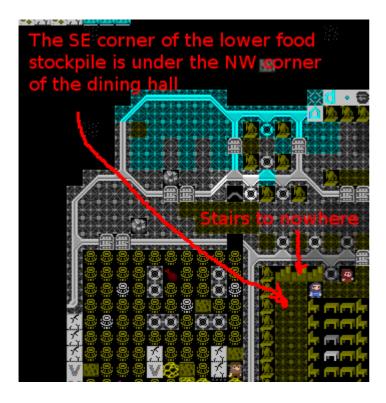
Anyway, the moment of alarm past, it was time to begin work on our reservoir issues. The current reservoir is still mostly full but we've got the manpower to spare so it's good to get these things done early. The current reservoir appears to get its water from a stack of 12 manually operated pumps, which is not exactly an optimal arrangement but which I'm not going to reengineer right now; it shouldn't be necessary to run these often.



Looking at the schematics reveals an interesting opportunity. The pump stack is located directly underneath the main food storage and preparation room of Lower Battlefailed:



Adding one more pump to the stack will allow this room to be repurposed as our new dedicated drinking reservoir. Furthermore, if you look one more level up on the maps, another nice alignment is revealed:



The new reservoir extends directly underneath the main dining hall. This will allow wells to be constructed right there where everyone's eating and drinking anyway. Convenient!

The loss of the current food storage room will require a new home for all that food to be found. After a thorough examination of the rooms of Lower Battlefailed, it appears that there isn't really any good place for it - by this point we're thankfully well beyond the "store everything anywhere that you can cram it" phase of Battlefailed's reclaimation (at one point I had to resort to storing cages with goblin prisoners in occupied living quarters - I'm told a lot of dwarves slept poorly as a result of that decision). So a new room will have to be excavated. Battlefailed is no longer just reclaimed, it is now growing!

There's already a large set of staircases in the dining hall that lead up to unbroken ceiling. Presumably the old Battlefaileders had expansion plans in that direction anyway, and checking the maps shows ample clear space above the main dining hall, so in the same style as the storage attic that was dug for the magmaworks I ordered a food storage attic to be dug directly above the dining hall. As with the new well location, this moves food and drink closer to where it will be consumed.

While work began below, an Elven trading caravan arrived with an extremely welcome load of wood. We hustled them inside, and none too soon - right after them came a goblin siege force, no doubt in hot pursuit of the caravan's valuable logs.

The goblins have axes in abundance and can travel to the nearby forests. Why do they instead come here to die? No matter. Fortunately the entire population was busy hauling food barrels and trade goods at the time, so nobody was caught outside. I sent the marksdwarf squad up to the sprinkler head to deal with the invaders. After some time had passed with no reports one way or another, however, I began to get worried. The elves were done trading and looked to be getting a bit edgy about being trapped in our toxic delvings. I took a few hours off of the reservoir project to go topside and see what was going on.

The marksdwarves were all in the sprinkler head, crouched alertly in front of the fortification slits and

watching the army of goblins camped below. The army of goblins was watching back. Nobody was shooting, or moving all that much. I asked the captain of the guard to explain the situation.

"No bolts," Stukos grunted. "So we're just hoping our reputation will drive them away."

"But you should have plenty of bolts. I bought a couple of binloads off of traders last year. Decent bronze stuff, not bad for human work. I told you guys to reserve them for combat."

"Yeah, and that's why we couldn't do any organized archery training lately."

"Right. So..." I noticed the adjective Stukos had thrown in there and sighed. "You used them up on your own time, didn't you."

Stukos nodded. "I'm getting really good. See that blighter way down there, with the copper scourge? I bet I could land a solid groin shot on him."

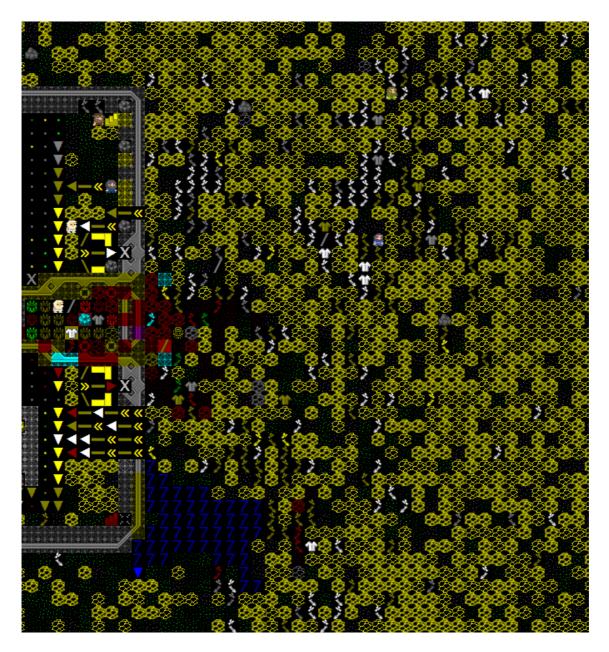
"If you had any bolts, that is."

"Yeah, if I had any bolts." Stukos cocked his head. "You gonna get on that, manager, or what?"

The magma forge was still out of commission while the new channels underneath were being dug, and I was in a bit of a grumpy mood from Stukos' carelessness so I wasn't eager to waste precious metal making them a new set. "They want training bolts, they get training bolts." I put in a large work order to have bolts made from the bones that Battlefailed has in vast abundance.

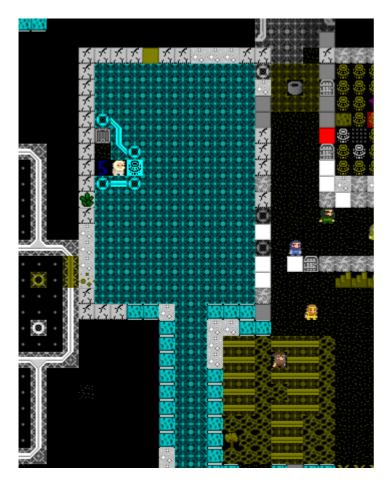
Eventually the marksdwarves were resupplied. Then they brutally butchered the siege force and the elves were free to depart in safety. The elves nearly committed suicide by pressing up against the inside of the drawbridge, which for some reason opens inward instead of the more traditional outward direction. They backed off just in time to avoid being crushed. Then, as they left, a migrant wave arrived. So everything worked out just about perfectly.

The bone bolts were surprisingly effective. I examined a few afterward and was very impressed with the quality of their manufacture. It seems Battlefailed as quietly cultivated an extremely skilled force of bonecrafters, I've had them continuously crafting skulls into totems so that they can be stored more compactly in bins. Finally a use for all this bone!



I also got to see the ballistae in operation against live targets, due to a fortunate choice the goblins made in where to camp during the siege. Not bad - took out a few goblins at extreme range. The effectiveness of the ballistae were reduced by the cowardice of the operators, unfortunately - whenever a goblin got too close they'd panic and flee their posts, despite being in control of the most massive weapon known to dwarfkind and being protected behind an impassible fortification. I've added ballista improvements to my to-do list - we need more of them to cover a wider field of fire, and a better control system for the fortification covers.

In the meantime the new reservoir is finished and the new pump is in place. I had an extension dug southward, running under the western edge of the dining hall, to allow for additional wells. An additional dwarf-powered pump is in place to fill it, draining the old reservoir into the new one. Three wells have been installed in the dining hall, two of native silver and one of gold.



The year ended much as it began, with a goblin siege arriving at our doorsteps.

For years Battlefailed had thwarted goblin assaults by cowering behind its walls and waiting them out. It had become a bit of a tired ritual really, a stalemate in which nobody really won and nobody lost. The siege that Spring had shown that the game was changing. The gates had closed quickly and the goblins had set up camp, as usual. But then Battlefailed had gone on the offensive. Crossbow bolts rained down from the old overhanging sculpture of a giant skull, and a number of ballista bolts lanced out from apertures in the walls. Now, not even a year later, even more ballista apertures had been carved.

The goblins knew this could no longer be a stalemate. They had to get inside and make it a melee fight, and fast before the gates had time to seal.

Amxu Gozrudab, the legendary goblin mace lord, led his squad of swordsgoblins in a full-out run across the sandy plain. The past decade's wreckage and litter had been cleaned up recently, removing cover but leaving the ground open for much-needed speed. As the goblins approached Amxu saw that the gates were still open and only a handful of marksdwarves had managed to scramble to their stations. The few haphazard bolts they fired at the approaching goblins were no threat; Amxu blocked the only one that came his way with a swing of his weapon. If they could just make it through the gate...

Amxu leapt across the threshold with a triumphant yell, just ahead of his squadmates struggling to keep up. Then the gate slammed shut behind him and the rest of the goblins crashed to a halt against it outside. Amxu didn't even notice. At last, he was inside Battlefailed! The promise of dwarf skulls crunching beneath his morning star filled him with unquenchable bloodlust and he charged onward into the entry hall.

Paving stones clicked underfoot, triggering traps. Dozens of arrows shot out from tiny holes in the walls but Amxu moved too fast for even their automated reflexes, rolling forward past them. He danced right past the slashing blade traps without even setting them off, and the cage traps had not been reloaded since the mechanics had been busy with other tasks.

There was only one obstacle remaining between Amxu and the helpless civillian popupation of Battlefailed. The marksdwarf Zon Evudkol had been just passing by, rushing to reach her post, when the goblin had burst in upon her. Zon bore the legendary artifact crossbow Silentslick, so named for its impossibly smooth operation as well as how its bloodthorn wood always looked unsettlingly wet with blood, and reflex raised the weapon up to fire a bone bolt at the enemy that had suddenly appeared.

Zon's reflexes failed her. The bolt went wide. Amxu gave a cruel, mocking sneer and hefted his iron morningstar in his right hand. "You are not worthy of weapon," he grunted in broken Dwarvish before charging.

Zon desperately raised Silentslick to block the attack, but true to his word Amxu didn't swing his weapon at her, instead delivering a terrible face-shattering blow with his empty left fist. As Zon reeled back, blinded by the pain and fountaining blood from her ruined nose, Amxu slammed the pommel of his morningstar down on her foot and tackled her.

Amxu rose back up and stood over the writhing dwarf and his cruel smile widened. He recognized this one from reports by earlier survivors of attacks on Battlefailed; this was the dwarf that had spent all day shooting bolts into nonlethal parts of a crippled goblin lying before Battlefailed's gates. Payback would be extra sweet. He swung his morningstar, first bashing Zon's legs to keep her down while he methodically worked her over. Bones shattered and flesh split under the assault.

But Amxu's brutality proved to be his undoing. With still nothing between him and the interior of the fort he tarried to extend Zon's agony, her screams echoing off the walls and alerting her fellows already positioned in the fortifications above to the invader within their defenses. Amxu let her scream, reveled in her screaming, focusing his blows on her ruined limbs. He slammed the morningstar into Zon's foot so hard that it stuck there, and he started kicking her rather than pull it out.

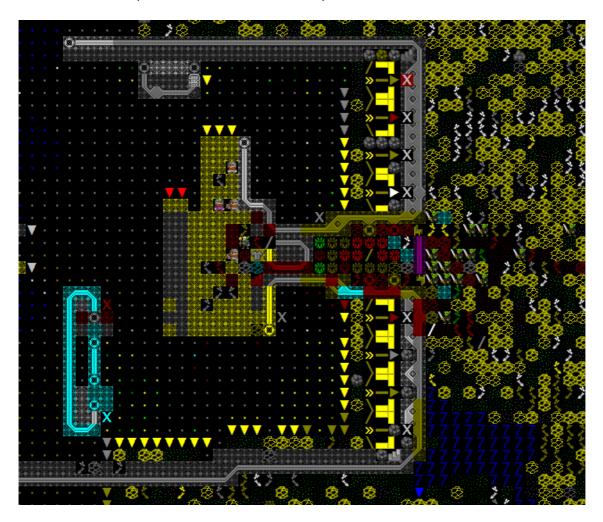
He was unable to either dodge or block when Kib Uzoldakost burst out of the stairwell behind him and fired a single bolt into Amxu's upper back. The bolt tore through his spine, sundering muscle and tendon and nerves. Amxu dropped both morningstar and shield from suddenly-limp fingers and toppled over, a stunned expression frozen on his face. Where moments ago he'd thought of nothing but bloodlust and murder, now he could only think of escape. He struggled to move. It was a testament to his might that he was able to, barely, squirm a short distance back toward the gate.

Right onto the slashing blade traps that he had so effortlessly skipped over only moments earlier. The trigger clicked and weapons lashed out, tearing skin in a dozen places but even now none able to land a fatal blow. Kib fired again, putting a bolt through Amxu's leg, but that didn't slow him down any more than he already had been by the shot to the spine.

Then Stukos arrived on the scene, the new recruit Onol Dallithlikot in tow. Stukos took one look at what had been done to Zon and brushed Kib aside. "We've got a siege waiting out there," he said grimly. "No time to waste. Vital organs... but not too vital." *Shunk*. Stukos put a bolt through Amxu's right lung. *Shunk*. Another bolt directly into Amxu's guts. The goblin's breathing became as labored as his movement and he looked ready to vomit. A fresh round of weapon traps triggered,

further slicing and slashing the suffering goblin's skin. Stukos nodded. "No worries about recovering from *that*. Onol, quick, see to Zon."

Onol's expression was like that of an Elkbird witnessing a cavein bearing down on it. She had always been a thrill-seeker but had never even seen battle before, she was fresh on the squad, and now *this* had landed in her lap. She hurried over and knelt by Zon's side.



Zon was barely conscious. "What do I do, Zon?" Onol asked desperately.

"Mercy," the dwarven woman managed to whimper. "Please, mercy."

Onol surged back to her feet and spun to face the goblin who had done this. In a rage, she delivered a kick to the quivering heap. The goblin whimpered too and Onol's rage faded. "Mercy. Right." Onol reached down and gripped Amxu's limp hand.

With a quick, firm pull, Onol slid the goblin's body into position over a slot in the floor. Its weight triggered the trap one more time and an iron scimitar scythed out, neatly bisecting the creature. One last burbling wheeze and it was over.

"Thank you," Zon whispered, finally fading into unconsciousness.

Despite heroic efforts on the part of the medical staff of Battlefailed, Zon would later succumb to infections from her many wounds without ever waking again.

```
x 2
x 4
x 3
    ing (@«-bronze mace-»@) strikes The Goblin Mace Lord in the
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kell

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tearing the muscle and tearing the right lung through the
      nountain goat leather cloake})!
Goblin Mace Lord is having more trouble breathing!
f=elk bone bolt#} has lodged firmly in the wound!
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/- tearing the muscle and tearing the guts through the ({@mountain
t leather cloake})!
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        spining (iron scimitar) strikes The Goblin Mace Lord in the left
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e Recruit attacks The Goblin Mace Lord but He rolls away!
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nning (iron scimitar) strikes The Goblin Mace Lord in the lower do the severed part sails off in an arc!
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Year 524

The new reservoir has been filled with water pumped out of the old reservoir, emptying the old reservoir and allowing me to descend and inspect the interior.

I have discovered a Temple of Madness.

The water we've been drinking all this time once filled a broad hallway, permeating the strange machinery filling alcoves along the sides. Twin axle shafts run the length of the hall, connected at each alcove by a gearbox. The alcoves each contain a pump, with trenches on each side containing a pair of waterwheels hooked up directly to the pump. The dark, dripping paddles of the wheels have clearly not moved in some time, but from the wear on their bearings they just as obviously *have* moved at some point in the past.

How? There is no source of water, no sink, no flow save for the gentle swirling as the water had been pumped out to allow access. I summoned Tirist Lazonol, our finest mechanic, to join me in the inspection and explain what I was seeing.

Tirist is of legendary skill, earned the hard way through work and experience rather than supernatural inspiration, and even so he was rather awed by the sight as well. "I've heard rumors of such constructions before but I've never seen one... and certainly never on a *scale* like this. These are self-contained dual-wheel water reactors. The pump brings water up from below, here, and deposits it here. It then flows to either side, into the trenches, there. And that flow turns the water wheels, which powers the pump. The net result is excess energy, which is tapped by those gears and fed into these two parallel axle lines."

"So, it produces power from nothing?"

"Yes, quite so." Tirist walked with me down the dripping hallway inspecting the devices as we went. The machinery looked intact, though stone rubble littered the floor and half-filled the trenches - the Old Battlefaileders who had excavated the place had been quite sloppy in cleaning up afterward. Presumably this was not something that had been intended for anyone to set eyes on again. "There are eight pairs of dual-wheel units, they all look intact," Tirist reported at the end. He did some mental calculations. "That many waterwheels will produce 3200 Urists of power. The internal losses by the wheels and pumps alone would be 480 Urists, and it looks like the gears and axels collecting the power together accounts for another 127, give or take. So this system - should it be set in motion - would generate a net output of just under 2600 Urists."

I whistled. "What did Old Battlefailed need that sort of power for?"

"There was an axle emerging from the reservoir when we first reopened Lower Battlefailed, remember," Tirist reminded me. "It ran down the hall to what looked like an empty pump stack shaft, the one we used for drainage when reclaiming the apartment stacks and then sealed up because it led directly down to some Forgotten Beasts lurking in the water."

I nodded. "Yes, I recall. We were urgently in need of wood and it obviously wasn't useful for anything so I had it dismantled." Tirist had a pained look at my mention of that but I couldn't feel any regret - as manager of this fortress I had to be pragmatic in balancing our needs and resources. I looked around at the waterwheels and axles filling the chamber. We were pretty short on wood right now, too, and there was a vast amount that could be salvaged from here. But before I gave Tirist a heart attack by suggesting dismantling this ridiculous apparatus I needed to think some more about its

purpose.

Old Battlefailed had been a society under siege, pressed hard from all sides by danger. It had ultimately been unable to muster the force to withstand what had faced them. And yet they had spent a not inconsiderable amount of effort on this thing. Had that waste been their undoing? Or did they have a grand plan that required it, and their failure to complete it had been their end instead?

I returned to my offices to pour over the maps of Battlefailed that I had been compiling. There was the empty pump stack that this abomination had been intended to power. It had obviously never been completely dug out, its top led nowhere. The bottom end descended all the way down to the waters of the lowest cavern level.

Right next to the magmaworks... I blinked. There hadn't been much scouting done in the caverns, of course, but the ongoing renovations to the magmaworks had resulted in a detailed record of the *underside* of the cavern, where the magma sea's roof brushed against its floor. There was a strange obsidian "stalactite" hanging directly underneath. The pump stack hadn't led to the water, not originally anyway, it had driven all the way through to the magma beneath.

A screw pump made of the right materials *could* theoretically pump sufficiently fluid magma. I started doing some calculations of my own, and combed the old records of what pump components had been resting in Old Battlefailed's inventory when we'd first arrived here. They'd never completed the task, obviously, but...

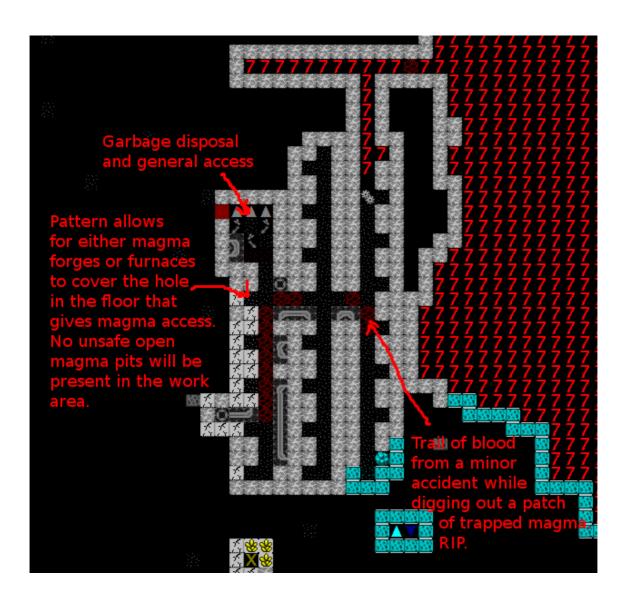
I worked long into the night. At several points dwarves came to knock on my chamber doors, and when I emerged in the morning they were relieved that I had not become Peculiarly Secretive. I felt just as inspired as if I had, however.

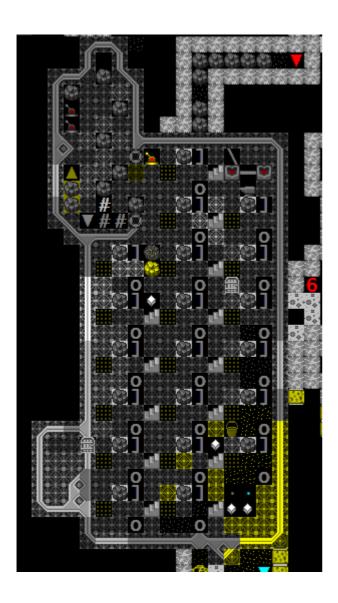
"Gentledwarves," I announced, "I have figured out what Old Battlefailed had hoped to accomplish here in this terrible place. A project that would have protected them forever. And I believe I have *improved* on that plan."

It would be a very busy year for Battlefailed, full of industry and activity.

The power generators we had discovered would be kept intact. I directed that additional drainage be dug for the trenches to allow the rubble to be cleared out of it. The floors would be resurfaced with worked stone to prevent the growth of any vegetation that might affect the system's operation.

The magmaworks renovations were nearly complete, but I'd been taking a leisurely pace overseeing the final steps since there'd been no pressing need for them.







Now there was a pressing need. The magma conduits under the furnaces were finally filled. I had a dozen magma smelters built to clear the massive backlog of old scrap metal that needed melting down - mustn't neglect ongoing cleanup operations just because one new idea has seized my interest - and the rest of the magmaworks were turned over to glass furnaces. We would need over a hundred sections of glass tubing and over a hundred glass corkscrews. The masonry shops were directed to produce a like number of stone blocks. Gabbro and mica preferred.

Tekkud and his miners were given a task too. The fantastic garbage chute they'd constructed for me would need some modifications and expansions dug.

And FAILCANNON... The masons received their orders. A redesign would be needed there. We'd already stripped off the old scaffolding and windmill platforms, so all that was needed now was the construction of new ones. Better ones.

I had long wondered just what the old Battlefaileders had been thinking when they'd constructed that ridiculous giant water faucet. I saw now that that had only been an interim state, a barely-functional stopgap measure. Now FAILCANNON would finally fulfill its promise and *succeed*.

It was a time of renovation throughout the fortress. And a good thing, too. With the main hauling tasks of cleanup finally finished there had been less and less for the bulk of the fortress population to do, resulting in an increasing population of idle dwarves. Idle dwarves who had plenty of time to fraternize. As a trained fortress manager I could see the danger of this - I hardly need mention dwarven sociologist Urist Kedkol's seminal treatise on the subject, "On the Development of Criticality

in Dwarven Interpersonal Relationship Networks". We had finally reached the count of 200 dwarves, the threshold at which even mad Queen Led realized it was time to stop sending migrants to us, so we had plenty of dwarfpower on hand for the work. Everything proceeded very smoothly and quickly.

There was one interruption this year. During the height of summer our lookouts reported a broad swath of smoke on the horizon, rising through the shimmering heat of the sandy grassland of the Plains of Ooze. I didn't pay the report much mind since no caravans were due, no goods were outside to suffer damage, and even if the fire did find some path through the patchy vegetation it couldn't harm Battlefailed's walls. But soon the heart of the fire came within visual range. It was a brush titan named Lafo. It was a strange beast composed of flame, with a shell and a stinger and not much else identifiable in its infernal structure.

After some thought I weighed the risks and decided to allow Lafo into our gatehouse. I had our military forces wait below, just inside the entrance to Upper Battlefailed, to kill it once it had done the hoped-for work. The roaring knot of flame saw our home and its open gate and made a beeline for it.



I'm told the radiant heat was painful all the way up in the Sprinkler Head, where the lookouts remained in vigil, and the interior of the gatehouse turned into a veritable oven as it passed. The many layers of blood that coated everything in a thick patina shriveled and scorched, peeling off in flakes to rain down on Lafo like some sort of gory snow. The poisons layered in with the blood was also cooked into inert ash. The gatehouse was *clean*.

When Lafo entered Upper Battlefailed the fight was brief and victorious. Lafo only managed to emit a single scorching burst of flame before being torn apart with our bolts and steel. It turns out that flame is not a very sturdy structural material. Alas, our strangely popular Mayor Fikod was one of two warriors who were caught in the burst of flame and perished of blood loss from his burns before he could be taken to the hospital. We'll miss you, Mayor Fikod, and your ridiculous mandates for native silver items that I have long ignored. May you be united with the stuff in death. An election was

immediately held and he was replaced by Kel Kubuklalar, who likes iron and green glass. I'm sure we'll get on wonderfully.

With the gatehouse clean it seems that the only remaining reservoirs of poison in Battlefailed are the Stairway of Death (which has been sealed by a locked hatch for some time now) and our own clothing. This was confirmed by a joyous event shortly after Lafo's visit; a kobold thief was caught *inside* Upper Battlefailed. The shoeless creature fled upon discovery and when last observed seemed to still be completely healthy.



I have unleased probe cats to confirm the situation. The few remaining stray spots of contaminant inside Battlefailed will be cleaned by constructing and removing grates over them. Here's an example of one that a cat found, possibly left by Buqui's corpse:



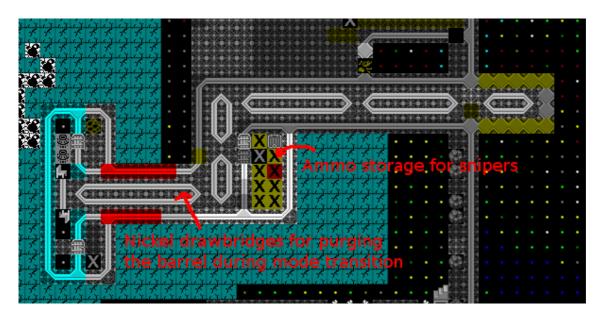
That excitement aside, the year was one of solid labor. One year, just a single year of work. I set that as our goal arbitrarily since otherwise there'd be too much temptation to relax and plant the seeds of Kedkol's predicted doom. A steady stream of sand bags flowed down from the surface, where a

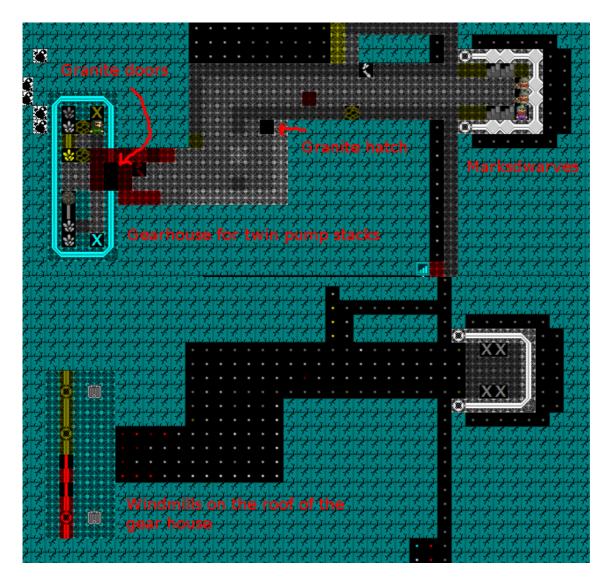
collection area had been designated in one of the unused side-caves of Upper Battlefailed. Finished pump components flowed up, stockpiled in the old dining hall. The old power output gear for the water reactors was removed and the hole sealed over, and a new main power shaft was dug and installed leading in the opposite direction to the west. Since the reactors were destined to be flooded again once the rubble was cleared I took extra care to ensure that no water could follow the shaft all the way to the magma pumps, to spill in and clog the mechanisms; I had the drive shaft rise up a level when it had to make a bend anyway, and in addition I added an overflow drain to the cavern outside that would intercept any pressure-driven water that made it over the rise just in case something unexpected occurred.

FAILCANNON received some more renovations. The archery range was moved down into Upper Battlefailed and the structure's "barrel" was simplified to allow a small room for ammunition to be maintained. A new archer post was established one level above the Sprinkler Head, carving arrow slits directly into the giant bone skull. A system of nickel drawbridges was built inside FAILCANNON's barrel to allow leftover fluids to be quickly and completely cleared between firings, and a set of gabbro doors was installed at the tip of FAILCANNON to allow the fluid pressure inside the cannon to build up before being unleashed.

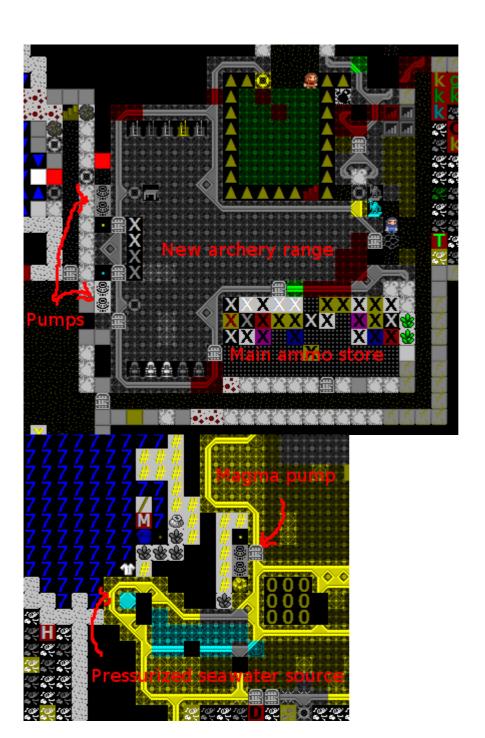
The nickel purge system is very important to the new design. You see, the original FAILCANNON, as it was when we arrived here, had two windmill-driven pump stacks that drew seawater up from the surface of the ocean. I presume there were two merely to increase the water flow rate. Since the magma was ultimately going to be delivered from the deeps by just a single pump stack, only one magma pump stack would be needed within FAILCANNON itself. The other pump stack was still rebuilt, however. I had it extended downward by an additional level to tap into the ocean a full level below the surface. This gives this single pump stack access to fully pressurized ocean water and should allow a far greater sustained water flow rate than the old dual stack unpressurized-source design.

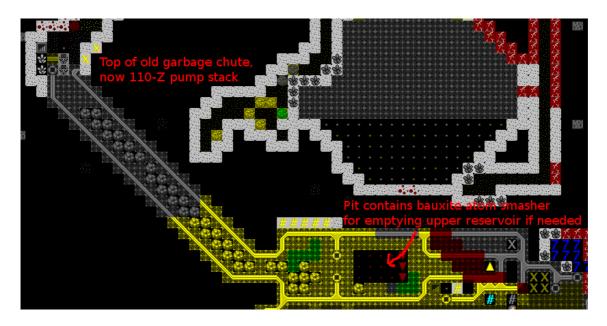
FAILCANNON will be able to shoot both hot and cold running fail. An important note to all future operators; make very sure to purge the barrel of one substance before switching to the other. A messy and damaging obsidian jam will occur otherwise.





Going down to the sources of the upper stack pumps:





The garbage chute was quickly converted into a fully-equipped magma pump stack. I broke with the design philosophy that the other pump stacks of Old Battlefailed had used by not relying on direct contact from one pump to the next to transmit power. Instead I had each pump fully supported by an intact floor and installed a 110-level-tall gear shaft beside the pump stack to transmit and distribute power among the pumps. This required 156 additional mechanisms and 111 additional axle segments, and increased the power requirement per level from 10 Urists to 18.5 Urists. The tradeoff for this additional complexity is a far more robust system. I had seen firsthand the fragility of the more efficient pump-supported pump stack several years earlier when Aci had smashed a pump at the bottom of the old stack that had used to run next to the Staircase of Death in the first cavern level. With that one pump destroyed the entire stack collapsed. Furthermore, such a stack can only be constructed one pump at a time starting from the bottom and working up. And there would be no way to replace the components of a single pump should it happen to be accidentally constructed of non-magma-safe materials. We had sufficient power resources, and mechanisms required only stone that we had in great abundance so I saw no real downside here.

The only thing we lacked was wood. The additional axles would need a lot of it and we were about 30 logs short. I wasn't concerned. Last time the dwarven caravan had come they'd brought more logs than that, and I had told the trade representative from Mountainhome that we would pay a premium for more. I was sure that come Autumn we would be adequately supplied and the final touches could be put on it all. Autumn was eagerly awaited. We finished everything else ahead of schedule, leaving me time to work on a new control room to house the levers for all of the complex mechanism Battlefailed had sprouted. Finally the caravan came and I rushed down with our broker to see what bounty they'd brought.

Eight logs. Eight measly logs. "We said we'd pay a premium for wood," I told the caravan leader. "You brought me barrels of eel blood. When have we ever purchased eel blood? *Twelve* anvils. Anvils are not consumable, you realize. We have plenty of anvils. I've had half our anvil supply melted down recently for being a waste of metal and space. If I needed more anvils I could have fifty forged by the end of the month, each one worth more than your entire load of useless scrap! Why did you only bring me eight logs of wood? I would have paid you a thousand dwarfbucks apiece. Ten thousand. As many silk socks as your mules could carry!"

"Would you like some fine prepared sea serpent brain?" The caravan leader asked me instead of answering. "It has excellent value for its weight. Or how about some leather? Fine tanned skins from

creatures all across the land. Also excellent value for its weight."

I have to admit, something inside me snapped. I left our broker to deal with these idiots however he liked and stormed down to the armor stockpile in Lower Battlefailed. I already wore steel high boots, a protection against poisonous floors should I step outside of the safe zone, and the ringing of metal on stone must have borne the note of my furious resolve as many of my fellow dwarves stopped what they were doing to watch. "Kikrost, what're you doing?" One asked.

I reached the bins that contained my goal and, as I began suiting up in full steel plate and chain I bellowed "Coastal Ships, Occult Wheels, Glowing Roads, to me!" These were our archers and our best melee fighters, essentially the whole professional military force of Battlefailed. "They mock us with their useless trade goods! The year is nearly up, the project will be complete on schedule. If all we need is wood I shall HEW THE WOOD FROM FLESH AND BONE! TEKKUD!" I saw our chief miner passing and raised a masterwork axe high to beckon him. "I'll need your pick too! With me!"

The growing troop of dwarves marched with me down the hall to my managerial office where the maps of Battlefailed were spread over every surface. "We need wood," I repeated once everyone was assembled. "And we *have* wood. Nigh on a hundred fungal trees, perhaps more, grow in the second cavern layer. They are guarded by three Forgotten Beasts, all of them ground-bound but one composed of flame and thus immune to Battlefailed's poisons. We have relied on those poisons for too long. We've forgotten what Dwarven steel can accomplish. We're going to *take* that cavern layer, TODAY."

There was a murmur through the room. My fierce speech had clearly caught the hearts of many, warriors who had never done more than spar were nodding hungrily at the thought of facing even such fearsome foes. But Stukos had seen more battles than any, he bore real scars and he had the real experience necessary for proper caution. "You've never been one to jump into something risky on impulse, Kikrost," he spoke up with a quiet but firm tone. "Tell me you haven't simply become enraged."

I smiled grimly. "Of course I have a plan. The only thing mightier than Dwarven steel is Dwarven engineering. Delving deep, striking the stone. Here's what we're going to do."

It all came to me quite quickly, but perhaps because I had subconsciously already been planning this for a long time and had only needed this final push to make me realize it. The plan was foolproof and also had provision to account for the cases in which it failed anyway. The spiral ramp passed quite near a wall of the second cavern layer, and passing through that narrow wall was a tall vertical shaft that had been dug for some unknown purpose long ago by Old Battlefailed. I would have Tekkud's miners dig a passage to this shaft, and then we'd place stone grates over it to allow access to the far side. Miners would then penetrate the wall into the second cavern layer, and all of our forces would retreat up the spiral ramp just around the corner out of sight.

Forgotten Beasts seem to instinctively know when a path opens to Dwarven prey and unerringly follow it. They also destroy whatever works of Dwarven construction that they encounter. The Beasts would come, and then as they reached the grate-covered shaft they'd do one of three things. One, they would destroy the grate before crossing over it. That would strand them on the far side of the pit and allow our archers to kill them in safety. Two, they would destroy the grate *while* crossing it. Perhaps the ideal case, this would result in the Beast falling seventeen floors to smash to death in a low-traffic hallway outside the old nobles' quarters (why the Old Battlefaileders dug this shaft I will never know). None of the beasts have poisonous blood so no dangerous contamination should occur. Three, the Beast destroys the grate after crossing. Less optimal, but it will cut off any reinforcements from additional Beasts and allow our warriors to charge around the corner and swarm it all on one.

The passage was carved and low-quality grates were laid. The cavern layer was breached. The first Beast roared in, smashed the grate the moment it saw it, and then stood in befuddlement at the far side of the pit trying to figure out a way to get to us while the marksdwarves rained death upon it. The grate was replaced and the second Beast repeated the pattern. Then the third. Then the cavern was ours.



The Beasts were hauled off to the butchery, adding our first non-poisoned Forgotten Beast meat to the larder, and our warriors wandered off to resume sparring with both relief and disappointment. A great wave of woodcutters went forth and we had our wood. Later, I had a drawbridge installed beyond the grates; in the event of future Beasts that were not so easy to deal with the cavern could be sealed once more. Hopefully it wouldn't come to that.

As winter came upon us there was only one remaining task; refilling and restarting the refurbished water reactors. Unfortunately the only water source for this task was the stack of thirteen manually-powered water pumps drawing water up from a small channel in the third cavern layer. I had not appreciated just how slow a trickle this would produce. By the end of the year only a handful of reactor chambers had sufficient water in them to operate. But it was enough to prove the concept. The internal resistance of the decoupled reactor complex alone is just over 600 Urists, so four reactor chambers would produce enough power to get the entire system running at an idle. I sent four dwarves in to manually prime the pumps of these chambers and sure enough, they started the whole

system going. We didn't quite hit our target of a fully operational FAILCANNON in just one year, but it seemed inevitable now. Everything was working. We just needed to wait for the trickle of cavern water to finish reaching the rest of the reactor chambers.

Year 525

You could almost hear the steady creak and rumble of the churning waterwheels all the way up in the main dining hall and we were all looking forward to testing the system. And then, a month into 525, word came down from the surface. An approaching goblin siege had been sighted. *A siege*. Such excitement I felt! It made little sense - sieges were at best a tiresome annoyance, at worst a tragedy and existential threat if we didn't get the gate closed in time or there were workers stranded outside the safety of the walls. But this time we were more than prepared.

Probably. The calculations were precise, the architecture had been checked and double-checked over and over, but there was really only one way to be sure it all worked. I should have refused to even consider testing FAILCANNON under real threat like this - what if something went awry? If some pump somewhere had been built with unsafe components, or perhaps some obscure section of wall hadn't been properly sealed...

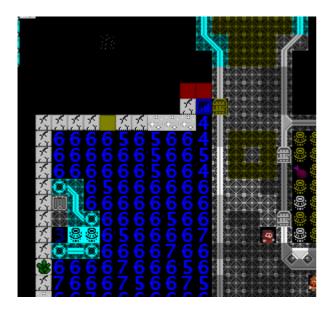
No. There would be blood and there would be fire! I rushed down to the main control room, a newly-dug mechanical marvel tucked in a secure place a short distance away from the main dining hall where off-duty dwarves could always be found to be called upon. Sure enough, several were already standing eagerly by the controls ready to unleash the sleeping power of Battlefailed.

A glance at the needle of the reactor power indicator instantly told me that it would be a difficult awakening. Levels hovered around 1200 Urists, only half of the 2400 Urists needed to run both the reactors and the magma pump stack. "Close the main surface drawbridge," I ordered. Nobody was out on the surface today. "Send Stukos' squad up to the Big Skull to keep an eye on the situation while we sort this out. The water supply stack, it's still being manned?"

"Day and night," the control room's shift foreman, Deduk, sighed. "The water source down on the third level, it's a trickle. You can't pump blood from a stone no matter how stout the dwarf who tries."

It was a crushing disappointment. Everything was going smoothly, but it was going so *slowly*. We'd be able to annihilate the goblin siege with FAILCANNON's fire... in perhaps three to six months' time. It was hardly an impressive inaguration. "We need water from _above_ the reactor level... Tekkud!" A flash of inspiration hit me and I ran out of the control room to catch the miner. "We've got plenty of water and all it's good for is drinking!" I grabbed some map scrolls from my office and hurriedly sketched my plan once I'd cornered him.

The drinking reservoir was in exactly the right spot. A few short cuts in the rock carved a passage from its northeastern corner down to the southern tip of the water reactors and once the wall was breached the gushing flow began inching much more rapidly down the rows of pumps.



I rushed back to the control room.

There was a flurry of excitement inside. "We're up to 1800 Urists," Lokum, the dwarf manning the power indicator, shouted as soon as I'd come through the door. "Oscillating to 1900, another reactor cell is about to turn over. What'd you do?"

"Put our wellwater to good use!" I laughed. We'd break out the finest booze to tide us over the loss of our reservoir, a perfect excuse to celebrate FAILCANNON coming alive. But there were more important and immediate concerns to focus on right now. The FAILCANNON system was complex but meticulously planned. "Checklist!" I ordered, directing everyone's attention to the words inscribed on the control room wall over the bank of levers controlling the magma.

"Ballista gunports closed, check! Main gate closed, check! The wall is secure and magma-proof." Deduk had already confirmed those when I'd ordered the drawbridge raised but it was good to make sure - having magma flow in through the ballista fortifications would make an expensive mess.

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: There were some pictures in this part, but they appeared only partially, so I had to remove them.]

"2200 Urists and rising!" Lokum hollered an interjection.

"FAILCANNON barrel port!" Deduk pulled the southmost lever in the bank of magma controls. "Barrel port sealed!" This was not a vital part of the new FAILCANNON, but would hopefully improve its deadliness greatly. A pair of magma-safe doors snapped shut right at the Sprinkler Head itself. This would allow the barrel of FAILCANNON to be filled completely with pressurized magma, and the entire pump stack below it as well, so that when the barrel port was reopened the gush of fire would be swift and unabated.

"2400 Urists and rising! Another reactor cell online!"

"Engage magma feeder pump!" The lowermost pump of the main magma pump stack had a separate control for its power linkage. This was to allow the system to be fully purged of magma in the event that maintenance was required; turning off the lowermost pump while leaving the rest of the stack running should in theory cause all of the magma present in the stack to be sucked out and ejected onto the surface. Although the pump stack didn't have power yet there was no need to leave the

lower stack disengaged. That was for later.

"2600 Urists!" Lokum's excitement was near fever pitch; we were just one reactor cell shy now.

"Engage FAILCANNON magma pump stack," I ordered. It was a bit early for that but I couldn't help myself. The pump stacks built into FAILCANNON itself weren't powered by the water reactors, but rather by the windmills on top, and they had already been confirmed operational by a dry test earlier in the month. I could imagine them creaking to life up there now. When the fire began to flow it would course directly through to the top. Assuming everything worked. It *had* to work. I'd gone over every iota of the plan over and over again...

"2800 Urists! We're stable over the red line! Main pump stack is a go!"

"Engage main magma pump stack." Deduk had been waiting on the lever and threw it immediately.

Two floors below us the lever shifted a mighty stone gear into position. The clutch clashed, sending a shudder through the thick wooden axles and causing the churning reactor wheels to momentarily slow. A grinding clatter echoed throughout the entire hundred-level powertrain of the magma pump stack as mechanisms were thrust against each other by the force being transmitted down it. Then, in unison, the pumps began to turn.



Pulses of glowing hot liquid fire dashed up the stack's steps, flooding into the sub-ocean channel and then spilling into the upper magma reservoir. It filled rapidly and then began ascending the second set of pumps, flowing into the nickel-floored barrel of FAILCANNON itself.

There was a fluid level indicator for FAILCANNON's barrel. We all held our breaths as it rapidly climbed to 7. "FAILCANNON fully pressurized," Deduk announced. "We're ready to fire."

I nodded. "Stand by." As excited as I was to pull the trigger, this was still FAILCANNON's first test run. I forced myself to reign in my excitement and study the system's indicators for a moment first.

"3000 Urists," Lokum announced quietly. I chuckled. There were still several reactor chambers yet to go; Old Battlefailed had overengineered their design. I could respect that. In the meantime, all of our magma systems seemed to be holding steady in their pressurized state. Our engineering was good

too. FAILCANNON was fully operational.

But I couldn't quite order the barrel port opened yet, I would be firing blind and that would be irresponsible. I had focused so much attention getting this system ready that I had neglected to supervise the surface. "Stand by," I repeated. "I'm going to go topside and get Stukos' report. I'll send the final order down by runner."

Deduk grinned knowingly. I think he believed I just wanted to see FAILCANNON fire with my own eyes. That was true, of course, though not my sole or even primary reason for going topside. And I believed that Deduk would be equally happy staying below if it meant he'd get to pull the lever that actually fired this thing. We parted and I jogged to the main ramp.

The run to the surface was long. I had even considered building a secondary control room in Upper Battlefailed, just for this sort of situation, but having redundant levers controlling something like FAILCANNON was an invitation to disaster. By the time I made it to the Big Skull I was gasping and near passing out from the trip and wondering if the risk of disaster would have been worth it after all.

I couldn't take time to recover. I saw that Stukos' squad were crouched at the Big Skull's fortifications, crossbows held and attention focused in deadly earnest, and there was a steady twang-chunk of bolts being fired at the goblins below. They were at our gates! "Stukos," I managed to wheeze. "Report! How many?"

Stukos was with his men at the fortifications, but it seemed his quiver had run dry and he was just directing his lesser marksdwarves. He stood up and sauntered casually over to where I stood out of the potential line of fire. "How many in the original attacking force? We counted about forty in total, plus perhaps two dozen trolls. A small siege."

"Where are they now?"

Stukos shouldered Urlolrubal with a grin. "I imagine most of them are probably in Hell. Come, look." He motioned me over to the nearest fortification.

I stared out at the Plains of Ooze. After a moment I began to laugh. The sparse grassland was a scene of absolute carnage. Dead goblins lay everywhere, peppered with a thick carpet of crossbow bolts both broken and lodged upright in their corpses. While I'd been busy down below frantically coordinating as mighty engines of destruction were brought online, Stukos and his men had been up here steadily plinking away at the goblin horde with their trusty little weapons. "How many left?"

Stukos gestured, drawing my attention to where the marksdwarves who still had bolts were sending their shots. Two goblins remained alive... if you could call that living. They were crawling pitiably through the grass, their bodies torn and broken. They wouldn't last much longer.

I'd got here just in the nick of time. Two live targets... I couldn't stop laughing. Eventually I had to pull out a scrap of parchment and write down my order to the control room by hand.

Disengage all magma pumps and trigger FAILCANNON barrel purge. Open the main gate and stand down. The siege is broken.

I shook my head. It had been an exhilarating ride and I couldn't feel let down by the outcome. No dwarf had died today and FAILCANNON's systems had been completely proven. That was enough for today.

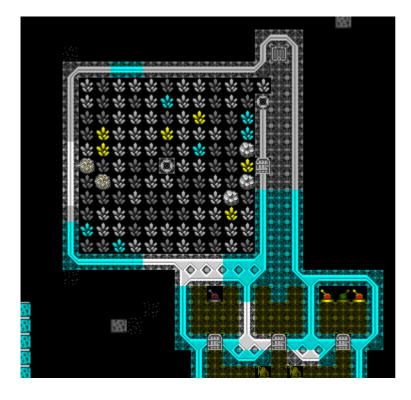
The excitement of the siege at the beginning of the year, and of bringing FAILCANNON's systems fully online, the bulk of the year afterward was a lazy - dare I say, almost tedious affair. In fact, much of our activity in the latter portion of the spring involved the unforseen and time-consuming procedure of shutting FAILCANNON's systems back down again.

Literally time-consuming. It turns out that there is indeed a cost to be paid when running dwarven water reactors. As long as those infernal contraptions were chugging away all other motion in the entire region seemed to slow, as if the universe itself was laboring under the load. Tirist tells me there may never have been a case where this many were in operation at once, and in such close proximity; perhaps this is why the old Battlefaileders never actually activated the system. In any event, we turned the blasted thing on without having a convenient means of turning it back off again.

The obvious approach would be to install gates to shut off the flow of water through the reactors, stopping them dead. Would have been handy to have thought of that before I flooded the place and got them all going, alas - there was no easy way for the engineers to get in there. As a fallback, another approach would be to simply start dismantling waterwheels until the power production fell below the power demands of FAILCANNON; the system would grind to a halt from internal friction alone. But now that FAILCANNON was active I didn't like the idea of taking it offline again for so long.

Instead, Tirist proposed something called a power dissipator. An immense system of gears whose only purpose was to act as a brake, adding friction to the system whenever it was engaged but being quick and easy to disengage should FAILCANNON be needed. So for much of the spring and summer our mechanics labored to assemble the needed contraption while FAILCANNON's heart pumped away unabated and continued sapping the flow of time with its abuse of physics.

Like I said, tedium. In any event, eventually Tirist's power dissipator was complete and the water reactors were stilled.

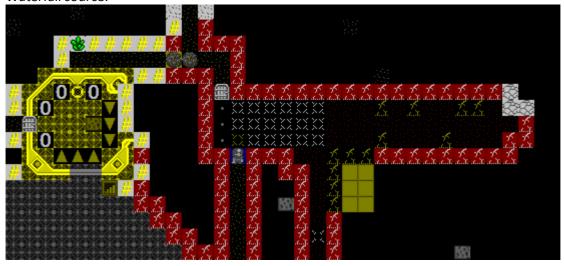


By this point I must admit a certain amount of stir-craziness. Lower Battlefailed is a marvelous place, an eclectic blend of haphazard design and grand architecture, but I and many of the other old-timers have been trapped down here by the hazards of our fellow dwarves' poisonous clothing and that alone made me appreciate it less. It's the oddest thing, really - I would never have expected to be so constrained by such an oddity. But while no harm comes from associating with dwarves whose clothes are soaked with toxins, the moment those toxins are washed off in a rain puddle and left smeared on the ground they become a deadly trap to anyone with poor footwear. This seems to be the only real remaining reservoir of poison left threatening us. Every few months such an accident happens and someone dies, despite my every effort to control traffic through such danger zones.

Time to put an end to it. As documented earlier in this log, I once attempted to implement a system I called "cleaning troughs" to remove this poison. Later renamed to "death troughs", to my chagrin. So, new and more elaborate methods will need to be attempted.

The problem with the death troughs was that although they washed poison off of clothed dwarves, the poison remained and affected any less-clothed dwarves who came along afterward. So any new system will need to have a way to quickly remove the poison from the place where the dwarf has been washed. My new plan is simplicity itself. There is a choke point at the top of the grand spiral ramp where any dwarf traveling to the surface, or between upper and lower battlefailed, must pass through. I plan to tap into the aquifer under the plains of ooze and use the resulting spring to create a continuous curtain of falling water across this choke point. Anyone passing through will be washed clean, and the waste water will sluice down through grates and drain into the disused shaft leading to the already-flooded first cavern layer.

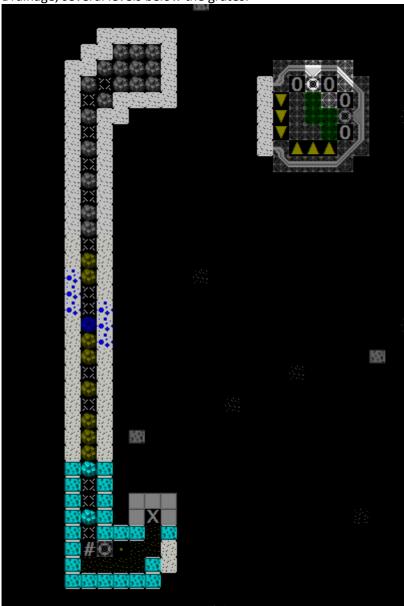
Waterfall source:



Cleaning corridor with grates beneath:



Drainage, several levels below the grates:

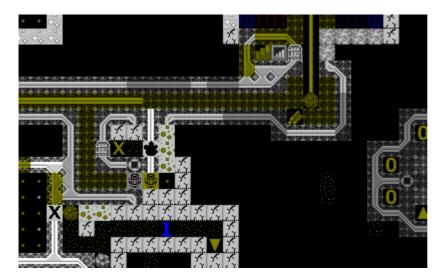


No pumps will be needed, simple gravity-fed flow will keep everything running. I will, of course, be installing a gate to allow the flow to be shut off.

While on the subject of waterworks, one of the great annoyances we suffered while getting

FAILCANNON running was the pitiful source of water we were tapping into down on the third cavern level. Not only is the water source down there a bare trickle, but the stack of eleven manually-operated pumps were a pain to keep running consistently - as soon as any one dwarf manning the stack needed to take a break, the whole operation was put on hold until a replacement could arrive. Since there's now ample excess power available from those water reactors, I decided to install a drive shaft and gear train to power this stack of pumps off of it as well.

This necessitated a temporary dismantling of a single segment of the main FAILCANNON drive shaft to install a gear.



What could possibly happen during such a brief period without FAILCANNON? Ha ha!

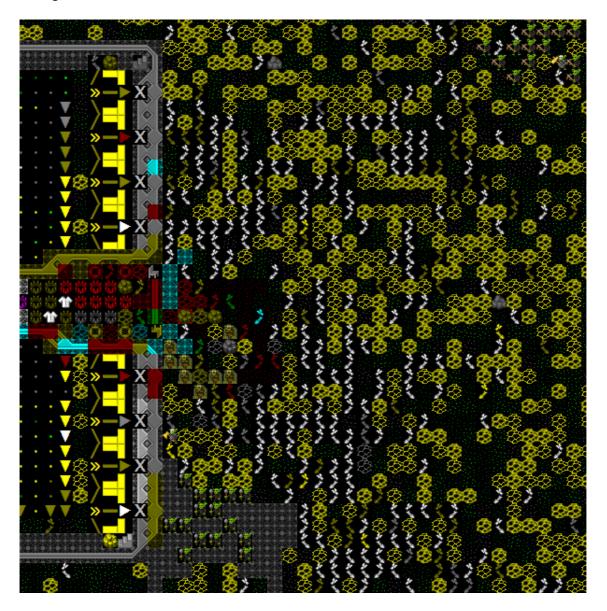


ARMOK DAMN EVERYTHING!

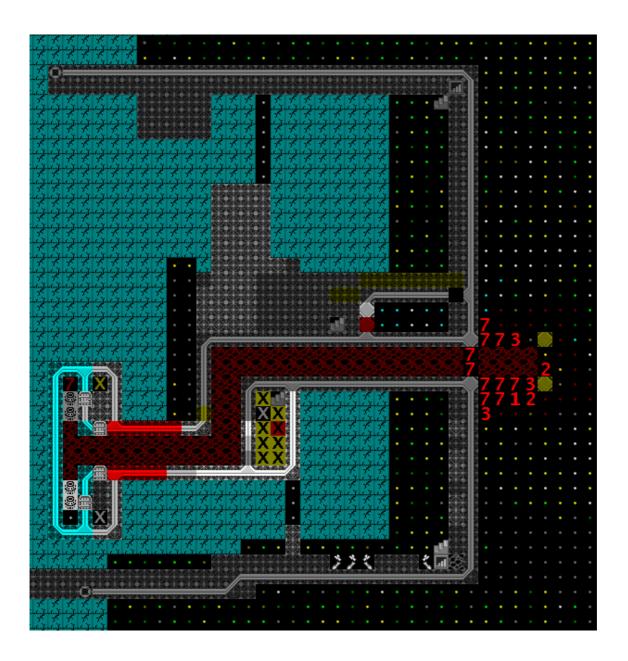
So, a brand new siege arrived the moment the drive shaft was disconnected. No matter, we closed the gates and the goblins milled about uncertainly beneath the sprinkler head with no way of breaching it. But they weren't going to die on their own, and they'd brought a squad of crossbowmen

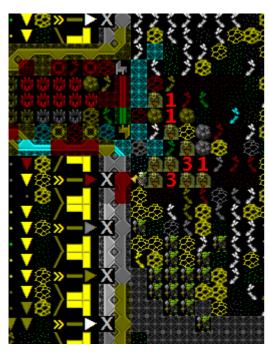
with them this time so I was reluctant to put the archers up there to deal with them alone. Not when we were so close *once again* to having a system to simply dump magma all over them! I had our engineers make all possible haste with getting the drive shaft reassembled - no need to hook the water pump stack up to it now, just get the thing back together with the necessary gear in place to hook things up to later.

By the time FAILCANNON was ready, alas, most of the goblin forces had retreated from their position under the sprinkler head. All that was left directly below were some trolls and a squad of macegoblins.



Nevertheless, it was finally time to fire FAILCANNON at its first live target! The power dissipator was disengaged, the proper sequence of levers was thrown, and the giant bone skull of Battlefailed vomited forth a beautiful spew of magma.





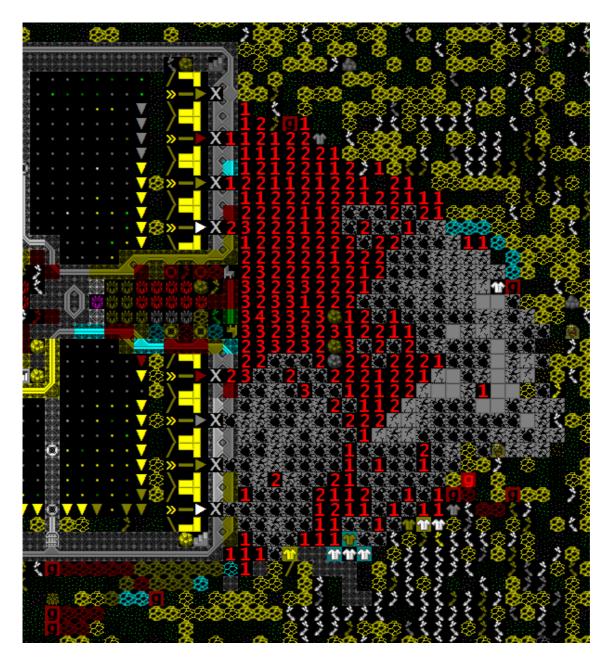
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A medium-sized humanoid driven to cruelty by its evil nature.

Her third finger right hand is dripping Tode Doomedmatched's goblin blood Her third finger right hand is melted Her first toe right foot is melted. Her second finger right hand is dripping Tode Doomedmatched's goblin blood Her second finger right hand is dripping Tode Doomedmatched's goblin blood Her lower lip is dripping Tode Doomedmatched's goblin blood Her lower lip is melted Her second finger left hand is dripping Tode Doomedmatched's goblin blood Her second finger left hand is melted Her second toe left foot is dripping Tode Doomedmatched's goblin blood Her upper lip is melted Her second toe left foot is melted Her upper lip is melted Her fourth toe left foot is melted Her first toe left foot is melted Her third toe right foot is melted Her third toe right foot is melted Her first toe left foot is melted Her first toe left foot is melted Her first toe left foot is melted Her third toe right foot is melted Her fourth toe right foot is melted Her fourth finger left hand is melted Her furth toe right foot is ozing Tode Doomedmatched's goblin blood Her first toe left foot is ozing Tode Doomedmatched's goblin blood Her fourth toe right foot is melted Her fourth toe right foot is melted Her first toe left foot is melted Her fourth toe left foot is melted Her fourth toe right foot is melted Her fourth toe left foot is melted Her fourth toe left foot is melted Her first toe left foot is melted Her foot is melted Her first toe left foot is melted Her first toe left foot is melted Her fourth toe right foot is melted Her first toe left foot is melted Her
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Yes! A glorious wave of glowing orange death, sweeping out across the plains of ooze! Burn, you horrible little beasts, who would come to pillage what we have so laboriously reclaimed!

Wait... the flow seems to be ebbing.



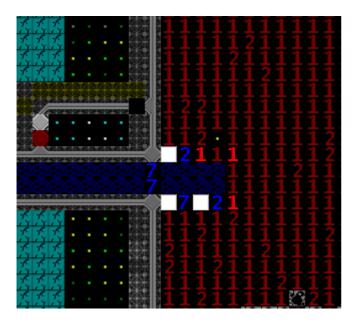
That's it?

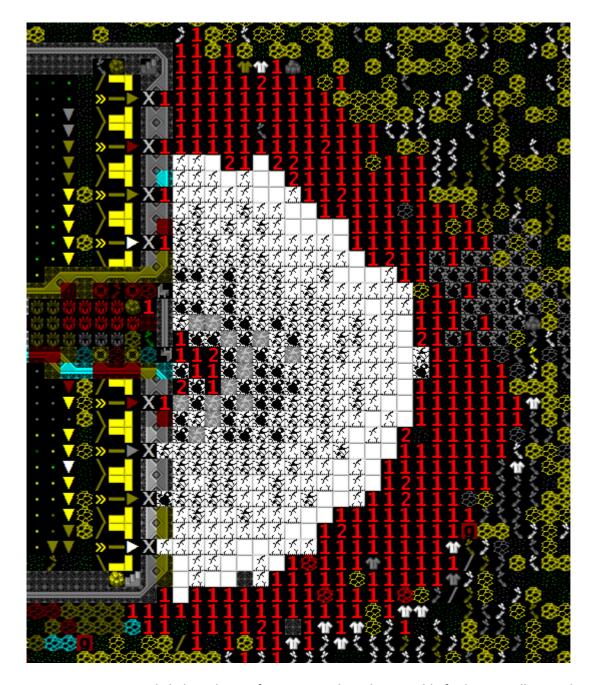
The majority of the goblin siege forces, well outside the range of the splatter of magma spread in front of Battlefailed's wall, maintained the siege and showed no signs of rushing forward to jump into the pyre themselves any time soon. FAILCANNON had, well, failed.

Partly this was due to being unable to fire earlier, when more of the goblins would have been caught. But this flow rate issue was unexpected as well. With FAILCANNON continuing to operate I took a tour of the system to see where the problem lay. Alas, it was right at the very foundation of FAILCANNON; the magma sea had vast reserves but they just weren't flowing fast enough into the bottom of the pump stack to replenish FAILCANNON's flow rate. As soon as the magma stored in the pump stack itself was exhausted in FAILCANNON's initial surge the whole operation was reduced to a trickle.

Well, then. More engineering would be needed to repair this deficit. That was fine; we are dwarves, we live for this kind of challenge. But first I needed that siege gone. I decided we might as well test

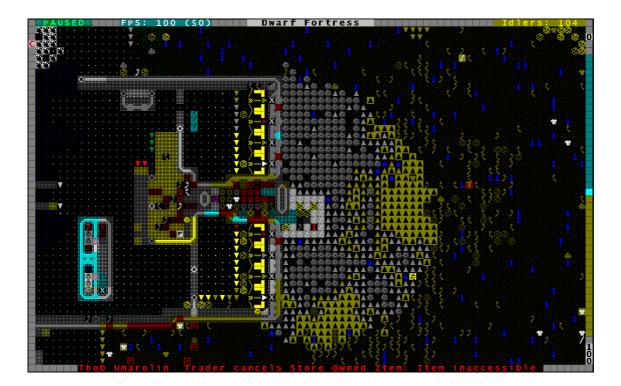
out FAILCANNON's other mode of operation, switching to ocean water and quenching the magma so that we could lure a new batch of targets within range.





A most impressive sight! The column of steam must have been visible for leagues all around. Unfortunately the heaps of cracked, blackened volcanic glass left in its wake was no more traversible to the goblins than the rock had been as a liquid. In the end I had to order miners to go forth and dig out a clear path for our invading guests to approach! Whereupon Stukos and his crossbowdwarves, now waiting in their perch over the sprinkler head, riddled enough of them with bolts to convince the rest to flee.

What a mess. But an educational mess, at least.



And so that was the year 525, the year of Fumbling with FAILCANNON. Perhaps next year we'll finally get the ruddy thing working correctly. First, however, is an even more important and risky milestone. I need to see to it that every dwarf in this fortress gets a shower.

[DEATHSWORD'S NOTE: So ends the great tale of how Battlefailed was resurrected. Unfortunately, this was abandoned and died.]